

LEGO BATMAN | PATRIOTS DAY | THE GREAT WALL | SPIDER-MAN

TOTAL

**CINEMA'S  
GREATEST  
PSYCHOS**

BEGBIE, BLONDE,  
BATEMAN...

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# Beauty AND THE Beast

**HOT  
FUZZ**

Revisited,  
unseen art!

**DARKER, SMARTER... RELEVANT**

**PLUS**  
**NAOMIE  
HARRIS**

**JONNY LEE  
MILLER**

**DENZEL  
WASHINGTON**

**KRISTEN  
STEWART**

"It's hard to  
regret mistakes"

**"WE NEED STORIES  
LIKE THIS MORE  
THAN EVER"**

*Emma Watson*

Future

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**NEW RELEASES  
REVIEWED**



AOC



Secret society  
of gamers

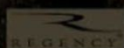
AGON

MICHAEL FASSBENDER

# ASSASSIN'S CREED

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#AssassinsCreedMovie



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## EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

**JANE CROWTHER (JC)** jane.crowther@futurenet.com  
@totalfilm.jane *Willo The Wisp*

**FEATURES EDITOR MATT MAYTUM (MM)** matt.maytum@futurenet.com  
@mattmaytum *The Emperor's New Groove*

**REVIEWS EDITOR MATTHEW LEYLAND (ML)** matthew.leyland@futurenet.com  
@totalfilm\_mattl *Sausage Party*

**NEWS EDITOR JORDAN FARLEY (JF)** jordan.farley@futurenet.com  
@jordanfarley *The Iron Giant*

**OPERATIONS EDITOR ANDREW WESTBROOK (AW)** andrew.westbrook@futurenet.com  
@andy\_westbrook *Watership Down*

**ART EDITOR MIKE BRENNAN** mike.brennan@futurenet.com  
@mike\_brennan01 *Laputa: Castle in the Sky*

**ART EDITOR, FILM GROUP CLIFF NEWMAN**  
*Thundercats*

## FILM GROUP, BATH

**Editor (SFX)** Richard Edwards (RE) **Art Editor** Jonathan Coates  
**Production Editor** Russell Lewin **Features Editor** Nick Setchfield **Home Entertainment Editor** Ian Berriman

## SPECIAL EDITIONS

**Editor** Will Salmon william.salmon@futurenet.com

## ONLINE

**Entertainment Editor, GamesRadar+** Lauren O'Callaghan lauren.ocallaghan@futurenet.com

## CONTRIBUTORS

**Editor-at-Large** Jamie Graham (JG) *Frankenweenie*

**Hollywood Correspondent** Jenny Cooney Carrillo (JCC)

**Contributing Editors** Kevin Harley (KH), James Mottram (JM), Neil Smith (NS), Josh Winning (JW)

**Contributors** Tara Bennett (TB), Paul Bradshaw (PB), Ali Catterall (AC), Tim Coleman (TC),

Tom Dawson (TD), Sarah Dobbs (SD), Stephen Kelly (SK), Philip Kemp (PK), Simon Kinnear (SK),

Matt Looker (ML), Joseph McCabe (JMc), Chris Schilling (CS), Kate Stables (KS)

**Illustration** Glen Brogan, Lizzy Thomas

**Thanks to** Nick Chen, Damian Hall (Production)

## ADVERTISING

**Commercial Sales Director** Clare Dove, **Advertising Manager** Simon Rawle  
**Account Director** Steve Pyatt

For advertising enquiries, please contact Simon Rawle [simon.rawle@futurenet.com](mailto:simon.rawle@futurenet.com)

## MARKETING

**Marketing Manager** Kristianne Stanton

**Subscriptions Marketing Manager** Jenima Crow

## CIRCULATION AND LICENSING

**Trade Marketing Manager** Michelle Brock

+44 (0)7825 603 490 [michelle.brock@seymour.co.uk](mailto:michelle.brock@seymour.co.uk)

**International Director** Regina Erak

+44 (0)1225 442244 Fax +44 (0)1225 687606 [regina.erak@futurenet.com](mailto:regina.erak@futurenet.com)

## PRINT, PRODUCTION & DISTRIBUTION

**Prepress and cover manipulation** Gary Stuckey

**Production Controller** Frances Twyman

**Head of Production, UK & US** Mark Constance

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## MANAGEMENT

**Editorial Director** Paul Newman **Group Art Director** Graham Dalzell

**Managing Director, Magazines** Joe McEvoy

All email addresses are [firstname.lastname@futurenet.com](mailto:firstname.lastname@futurenet.com)

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

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Overseas reader order line & enquiries **+44 (0)1604 251 045**

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**Non-executive chairman** Peter Allen  
**Chief financial officer** Penny Ladkin-Brand

Tel +44 (0)207 042 4000 (London)  
Tel +44 (0)1225 442 244 (Bath)



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# WELCOME TO TOTAL FILM THE SMARTER MOVIE MAGAZINE



**B**e our guest this issue and enjoy a little nostalgia trip to your youthful years, watching *Beauty And The Beast* back in '91, as I quiz the cast and the filmmakers on how they've made the live-action incarnation both darker and deeper. Emma Watson promises it's a film that will resonate with you now, even if you're all grown up and no longer running home from school to watch *The Fresh Prince Of Bel Air* and loving Mr. Blobby on *Noel's House Party*. While I met up with the *Beast* gang in NY, the rest of the team travelled to France to catch up with Kristen Stewart, Atlanta to the sets of *Fist Fight* and *Hidden Figures*, LA to talk *Patriots Day* and *Fences*, plus England's green and pleasant land to revisit the filming of classic comedy *Hot Fuzz*. We also tallied our favourite cinematic nutjobs and talked walls with Matt Damon and pantomime horses with Kate Beckinsale. In the words of Gaston, it's an issue that's roughly the size of a barge!

## ENJOY THE ISSUE!

*Jane*

Jane Crowther, Editor-in-Chief

## CALL SHEET THIS ISSUE'S EXTRAS



**MATT MAYTUM**  
FEATURES EDITOR

The food on set of *Hidden Figures* was amazing. "Imagine my anger, they had every waffle known to man," mock-fumed no-carber Octavia Spencer.



**JORDAN FARLEY**  
NEWS EDITOR

Went on the set of TV show *Outlander* in Glasgow and was welcomed by a man blasting deafening bagpipes. If only every set had a themed greeter.



**JAMIE GRAHAM**  
EDITOR-AT-LARGE

It was great to chat to J.K. Simmons about *Patriots Day*. I marvelled at how piercing his blue eyes were, then realised he was choking on a cashew nut.



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# Dialogue

Mail, rants, theories etc.



EMAIL [totalfilm@futurenet.com](mailto:totalfilm@futurenet.com) WRITE Total Film, 1-10 Praed Mews, London W2 1QY  
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TF'S CINEMATIC AGONY  
 UNCLE HAS YOUR BACK.

## DEAR WINGMAN

I went to see the 70mm print of *Rogue One* at the BFI IMAX. It was awesome. But worryingly, as I am 47, when Darth Vader [SPOILER REMOVED!], all the hairs on my arms stood up. I was in fanboy heaven. I wonder if this makes me officially your saddest reader or is there anyone out there who is sadder than this middle-aged sadsack of ultra sadness?

PHIL SLOAN, BEXLEY

## WINGMAN SAYS...

Firstly, Phil, we'd be more worried if you *hadn't* lit up like a Death Star at *that* Vader moment. And secondly, the phrase "sad Total Film reader" is surely an oxymoron. TF readers are by definition cooler than Arctic cucumbers (if there is such a thing). That said, an extreme-geekery contest does sound fun... let battle commence! In screen-accurate cosplay! Question for WM? Email me!



## STAR LETTER

★ After 2016's economy box of cinematic fireworks, with its (mostly) duds, fizzlers and damp squibs, I think the new year is going to explode with a deluxe party chest of kaleidoscopic rocket volleys, sonic repeaters and thunder barrages. So look up to the cinema screen skies – here come the movie pyrotechnics bringing in 2017: "5, 4, 3, 2, 1..." Swiiiiisssshkaboom!" – *Rogue One*; "Crackkcrackklecrasssh!" – *La La Land*; "Weeeeewhirrwoosh" – *Manchester By The Sea*; "Bang! Bang! Baaaaang!" – *Silence*. HAPPY NEW YEAR!

DAVEY, VIA EMAIL



And to you, sir. Yes, 2017 is looking pretty hot right now – for one thing, after a rough '16 – *Batman V Superman*, *Bad Santa 2*, *Ben-Hur* – the letter B's set for a big comeback: *Blade Runner 2049*, *Beauty And The Beast*, *The Boss Baby*,

*Baywatch*... something for adults, kids and horndogs of all ages. Davey and everyone with a letter printed here will receive a copy of *Kubo And The Two Strings*, out now on DVD, Blu-ray and digital via Universal Pictures Home Entertainment. Didn't send an address? Email it! Better Laika than never.

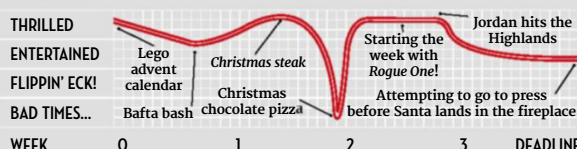
## SOB STORIES

I'd like to respond to Christoph's letter concerning films that make you cry [TF254]. I may have been an odd child growing up; I sat in the cinema seeming to be the only one not weeping when E.T. had his 'death'

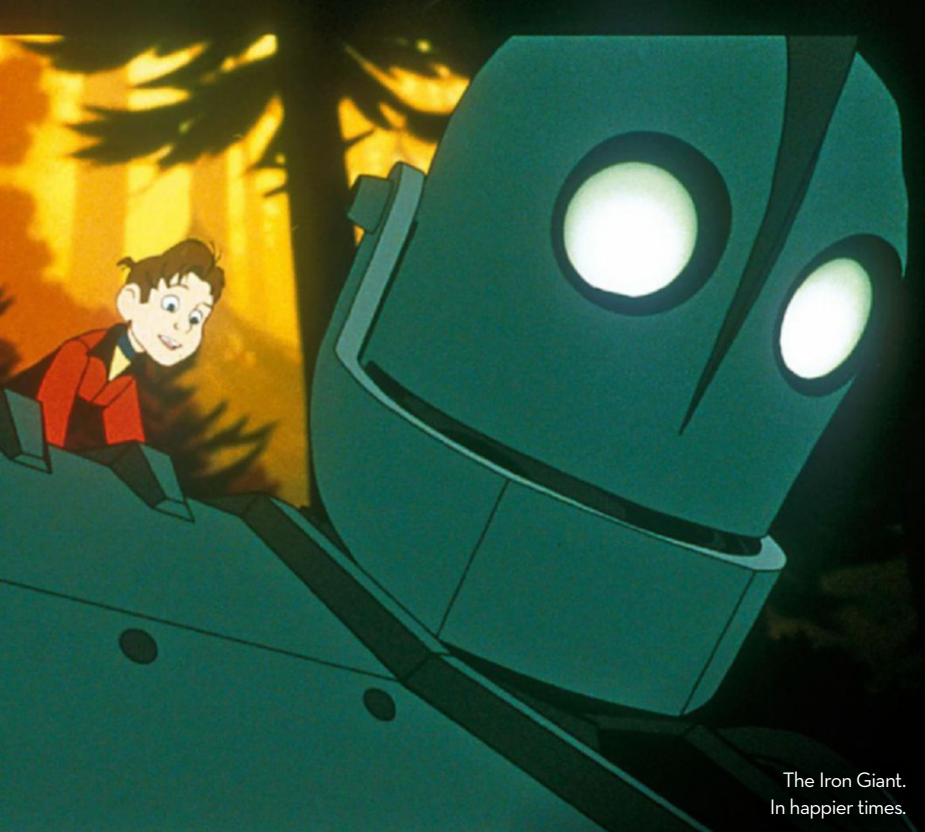
## ROGUE EMOTIONS

The latest *Star Wars* has left some readers questioning their emotional wellbeing.

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scene. I also didn't cry when Yoda died in *Return Of The Jedi*. I choose to cry at films not many people seem to have mentioned, like *Children Of A Lesser God* or the Clint Eastwood movie *Honkytonk Man*, which left me a complete wreck. But the one that really sums me up is Darth Vader in *Jedi*. Forget Yoda – we just lost the biggest baddie in film history. I wailed like my dog had just been run over. Should I worry?

**MARK SNAPE, RAMSGATE**

**W**hat makes me cry? The end of *The Iron Giant* where he sacrifices himself. Hogarth says "You are what you choose to be" in the voiceover. The Iron Giant replies "Superman", before being obliterated. Seen it six times, cried six times. That's a bona fide, 100 per cent strike rate. My girlfriend thinks I'm a freak. Boo hoo.

**ROBBIE FORBES, VIA EMAIL**

## DARTH ROOM BREAK

**R**eally enjoyed Jamie Graham's latest article 'Meeting Stars In Unusual Places' ['It Shouldn't Happen

To A Film Journalist', TF254]. I was at a Comic-Con event in Cardiff answering the call of nature; standing two doors down was the actor Ray Park, aka Darth Maul in *Star Wars: Episode I – The Phantom Menace*. We had a quick hello and nod of our heads before carrying on with our business. At that particular time Darth Maul was certainly NOT the baddest boy in the *Star Wars* universe.

**LEE MURCUTT, BLACKWOOD**

At this point, a lesser, more crudity-inclined magazine would no doubt inquire as to whether he extended to twice the length of the average Force-user, but we're above that.

## CRUNCH TIME

**I**'ve just seen *The Accountant*. I really hope they make a sequel, if only so they can use the strapline: 'This time it's personnel.'

**ALEX COLLIER, DURHAM**

Will it star Maths Mikkelsen?

# OFFICE SPACED

Chatter 'gems' overheard in the Total Film office this month...

- \* "We lived for a year on squashed cream horns." \* "Stop making me look at balls!"
- \* ""Do you reckon Admiral Ackbar is permanently damp?" \* "I wish there were audio books by Lego Batman."



# TOTALFILMONLINE

@TOTALFILM



## BLADE RUNNER 2049 TRAILER

<http://bit.ly/2i69rzB>

"It's going to be epic!" raved @sabrinanorth07, while @Zonnum asked: "But [Deckard]

was a replicant... how can he still be alive and older?" And @juhakatila went meta: "Chewie, we're home!"



## A YEW TREE CALLS

<http://bit.ly/2hWju6M>

For *A Monster Calls* we received a classy watercolour set, collector's edition book and a yew tree. And then the whole lot again the next day. Not complaining.



## CREEPY CHRISTMAS CARD

<http://bit.ly/2h6xxbM>

This *Lights Out* Blu-ray tie-in looks pretty innocuous. But when we shone our new black light

on it, a sinister message appeared. Hopefully the torch didn't find anything equally sinister at our Xmas party...



## CREEPY MASK OF THE MONTH

<http://bit.ly/2hWfOSH>

More scary fun in the dark, via *The Purge: Election Year* on Blu-ray.

"Well, that's the best thing ever," said @GaryBlogden. "Can't breathe in it, mind," said the ed. "The price you pay for fashion," he responded.



## SWEET HAMPER OF THE YEAR

<http://bit.ly/2hnrj4V>

We ruined not just Christmas dinner, but all dinners with this sugary bundle, promoting Talk

Talk's #PickandmixTV. It was worth it. Any tips for getting the last bit of wrapper off a chewy Drumstick?



## PUNCH BALL OF ALL TIME

<http://bit.ly/2h8tIEg>

One of our favourite giveaways ever, this *Bleed For This* punch ball provided stress relief during

Christmas deadline week. Still looking for the wag who changed the letters to 'Total Milf', mind you.



## WHAT DO VADER'S BUTTONS ACTUALLY DO?

<http://bit.ly/2gYubnE>

"The one on the right makes him say, 'To infinity...

and beyond!' quipped @James\_Wilcock; while @blimey50505 refused to play: "Nothing. It's not real."





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## BREAKING BRAD

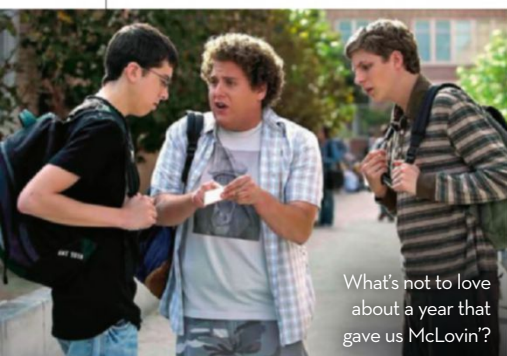
**H**aving just watched Brad Pitt in *Allied*. I feel compelled to respond to accusations that his acting style is somewhat wooden. I don't want to get sappy, but I think we should leaf him alone. It really goes against the grain to bark more abuse and chop him down, to toss him like a log into the cinematic flames. You wooden like it! Taking a root-and-branch look at his career, I will never forget his most natural performance in *The Tree Of Life*.

**THOMAS CHIPPENDALE, VIA EMAIL**

C'mon, Brad wasn't so bad – what about the gusto he put into donkey-kicking that chair? Actually, 'yew' were probably confused which was which...

## KINGDOM OF '07

**I**n response to Lucy Bartlett's letter concerning the worst/best years for film this side of the millennium [TF253], I'd just like to give a huge shout-out to 2007. A year in which



What's not to love about a year that gave us McLovin'?



we were blessed with *American Gangster*, *Superbad*, *Sweeney Todd*, *No Country For Old Men*, *Knocked Up*, *Zodiac*, [REC], *There Will be Blood*, *Into The Wild*, *The Assassination Of Jesse James*, *Juno*, *Planet Terror*, *Hot Fuzz* and not forgetting my favourite of them all, *The Darjeeling Limited*.

What a year! As a film school graduate and currently a music video director, I do feel that it's somewhat productive for me to occasionally watch an awful film to remind me of what NOT to do. So a year that also produced monstrosities such as *Epic Movie*, *Pirates Of The Caribbean: At World's End* and *I Now Pronounce You Chuck And Larry* is even better!

**OLLY PHILPOTT-SMITH, MANCHESTER**

Good news is, we've given one of your '07 faves the illustrious 'Total Film Classic' treatment: make your way to page 136. Bad news is, we missed the chance to cover-mount a tie-in swear jar.

## TROUBLE WITH HARRY

**I**'ve never liked One Direction. Many do. Good for them. But I do like Christopher Nolan films. Again, many do. But my interest in his upcoming *Dunkirk* has been tainted greatly by the casting of Harry Styles. Although I am sure there are many actors who could have been given the part, we have got to remember he is a singer. His appointment was obviously made to attract a new screaming audience who believe a singer, as their God-given right, can also act. Apparently One Direction fans are stressing out about his fate in the new film. Even though the film is a while away, I don't care. But if his character dies, we'll have tears as well as screams. Can't wait.

**MARTIN JACKSON, BLETCHEY**

True, it's unlikely Harry will outclass Messrs Branagh, Rylance and Hardy in Nolan's opus, but we could be looking at a brave new dawn for ex-talent show stars on film. Certainly compared to the big-screen armageddon that was *Pudsey The Dog: The Movie*.

## BORE STORY

Does WW2 drama *Allied* suffer from iffy acting courtesy of Mr. Pitt? That's what some wood say...



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# TEASERS

COMING ATTRACTIONS

- \* Marvel's webhead **swings into play** p18
- \* Back to space with a **boy from Mars** p28
- \* **Jeff Nichols'** new awards contender p26
- \* **Paul Verhoeven's** outrage magnet p30

EDITED BY JORDAN FARLEY



**EXCLUSIVE**

## MONUMENT'S MEN

**THE GREAT WALL** | Zhang Yimou brings us one monster of a movie...

**W**hen you're making a movie set on the world's longest wall, it has to be big. Budget, cast, crew, sets, even the recent nine-minute trailer... everything about Zhang Yimou's monster movie is fashioned in "a grand scale", says the Chinese director. Costing anywhere between \$135 and \$150 million depending on who you believe, "[It's] the biggest film ever produced in China," he notes, not without a smidgen of pride.

Liable to dwarf even Zhang's own martial arts epics *Hero* and *House Of Flying Daggers*, *The Great Wall* stemmed from a concept that was originally hatched by Thomas Tull, CEO at US production company Legendary. "I was immediately drawn by the idea

of fighting monsters on the Great Wall. I found that very unique," says Zhang. "It also has a lot of Chinese history and elements, including the monster, which is from Chinese legend."

While the premise is torn straight out of Hollywood's monster-movie

playbook – as the Chinese army is forced to repel thousands of ravenous beasts that emerge from the Earth's depths – Zhang is particularly pleased by this Chinese element. Set in the era of the Song dynasty, which ran between 960 and 1279, the monstrous foes are inspired by the mythical Taotie – the original national symbol of China until the dragon usurped it.

Still "prevalent" in Chinese culture today, this creature remains a symbol of greed and so "really works for our story" says Zhang. It certainly chimes with Matt Damon's character William

**ALL AQUIVER**  
Matt Damon's Crusader/arms dealer finds himself joining an altogether different crusade.







Garin, a mercenary fighting in the Crusades who pulls together a small team of bandits to head to China and steal the country's most valuable invention: gunpowder. "Little did they know," adds the director, "the Chinese army are preparing to fight a giant battle against these monsters."

Scripted by a phalanx of writers including *Rogue One* rescuer Tony Gilroy, this plot description rather contradicts the early (incorrect) guesswork made by social media users when the first trailer came out. Criticising the film for 'whitewashing', it was suggested that Damon's role belonged to an Asian actor. "The idea that he stole an Asian or Chinese actor's role is preposterous," fumes Zhang, "We were never intending to cast a Chinese person in that role."

Recently speaking to the Associated Press while promoting the film in Beijing, Damon concurred, calling the story nothing more than click-bait. "It suddenly becomes a story because

people click on it, versus the traditional ways that a story would get vetted before it would get to that point... eventually you stop clicking on some of those

more outrageous things, you just realise there is nothing to the story."

Even the idea that Damon was playing a 'white saviour' is incorrect. "Once they see the movie, they'll understand that there are Chinese heroes who've been fighting this monster for a long time and there are many Chinese roles that are very heroic," says Zhang. "They don't need Matt Damon to come and save them – there's no need for that. His character just happens to meet up with this army that's been battling this monster for a thousand years before he shows up!"

At least the production didn't do a Jennifer Lawrence and go and scratch its butt on a historical landmark (sorry Hawaii). The real Great Wall, that runs for thousands of miles, was strictly off limits. "Of course we cannot shoot there – it's an old artefact and protected by the government and so we weren't able to film anything on

the Great Wall," says Zhang. "Plus there are thousands of tourists there every day so we won't be able to close anything off."

The production team built two walls in a studio in the city of Qingdao, on the east coast of China. Constructing a low wall and a high wall – both well over 200 metres in length – behind each was a giant green backdrop. "Matt Damon said it was the biggest green screen he'd ever seen, and I think it's the biggest green screen ever assembled in the world, up to this point," says Zhang. "It's actually very unique – the wall feels very real but you look around and all you see is green!"

It didn't stop there. Weta, the Kiwi outfit behind *The Lord Of The Rings*' digital effects, not only created the CG monsters, but produced more than 20,000 props and 5,000 weapons. The crew, meanwhile, comprised more than 1,300 personnel from 37 different countries. It was so vast that more than 100 translators were required to convey

instructions in multiple languages. "It was like a small United Nations assembly," laughs Zhang.

Despite working with Damon and co-star Willem

Dafoe – and Christian Bale on his last film, *The Flowers Of War* – the 65-year-old Xi'an-born director admits directing in a language he didn't understand was tricky. "I worked with so many great English speaking actors but I never picked up any English!" he sighs. "Matt actually picked up a lot of Chinese. After I'd give him direction, he'd say 'Hao' – which is 'Great!'"

Damon may be the international face of the film, but he's not the only star. Local crowds will doubtless flock to see the acting debut of Wang Junkai, a singer in the hugely popular Chinese boyband TFBoys. Zhang remembers an early press conference: "Matt comes out of his hotel and he sees flowers all over the hallway. He told me, 'I didn't know I was that famous in China!' Then he found out it was all for Wang Junkai." Ouch. **JM**

ETA | 17 FEBRUARY / THE GREAT WALL OPENS NEXT MONTH.

#### RIGHT

Unable to film on the real Great Wall, the crew instead built giant sets and green screens.

#### BELOW LEFT

Huang Xuan, Eddie Peng, Zhang Hanyu and Kenny Lin are among the huge roll call of Asian stars lining up.

#### BELOW RIGHT

Pedro Pascal plays Damon's merc buddy Tovar; Tian Jing (bottom) is Commander Lin Mei.







13





## HOT RIGHT NOW

## TARON EGERTON

DRESSED FOR SUCCESS...

**T**he moment someone presents me with a pair of tights, I'm calling it quits." Taron Egerton isn't joking. Used to rocking designer suits in *Kingsman: The Secret Service*, shell-suits in *Eddie The Eagle* and monkey suits in *Sing*, the 27-year-old has a clear style choice in mind for his upcoming *Robin Hood* reboot. "It's going to have a rock 'n' roll quality to it," he teases, "I'm not sure that anyone's completely nailed Robin Hood yet. I'm quietly hoping that this is the one that's going to get it right – and it's going to do it without any tights..."

Spending 2016 acting alongside pretty much everyone in Hollywood – from Matthew McConaughey, John C. Reilly and Scarlett Johansson in *Sing*, to Julianne Moore, Channing Tatum and, er, Elton John in *Kingsman: The Golden Circle*, Egerton has been keeping good company.

Coming out of nowhere to upstage Colin Firth in 2014's original *Kingsman*, Egerton went from action to comedy to drama – with this month's *Sing* proving he's even good at karaoke. Next up, he's getting rich quick alongside Ansel Elgort and Kevin Spacey in *Billionaire Boys Club*, before re-joining the secret service for *The Golden Circle* ("Bigger, badder, more guns. Y'know, all that stuff!").

But it's 2018's *Robin Hood* origin story that's looming largest. "When I was first sent the script I was hesitant to even engage with it," he admits. "I think there's a very large question mark over whether the world needs another *Robin Hood*. But it's completely revisionist. Very dark and very character-driven. It's fairly unrecognisable as a period film."

Describing his Robin as "highly flawed and not even that likeable", Egerton's Hood rides with Jamie Foxx's Little John. "The dynamic between those characters in this is really interesting," he adds, "And I can't imagine anyone better in the role. It's all pretty exciting at the moment." **PB**

ETA | 27 JANUARY / SING OPENS LATER THIS MONTH. ROBIN HOOD OPENS IN 2018.





## FIRST WORD

## TRAVELLERS' TALE

**TRESPASS AGAINST US** | Shedding light on the Travelling community in a colourful crime caper.

**I** thought it was a long overdue story from the point of view of inside the Travelling community," says Michael Fassbender of *Trespass Against Us*, which made its debut at the 2016 Toronto International Film Festival. Fassbender stars as Chad Cutler, a Traveller who's looking to break free from his overbearing criminal father, Colby (Brendan Gleeson).

It's a blend of fast-paced crime caper and social commentary as the Cutlers undertake various robberies: some well-planned mansion heists, others spur-of-the-moment carjackings. The idea sprung from screenwriter Alastair Siddons' previous documentary work. "He showed me clips of stuff he filmed," says director Adam Smith, making his feature debut after TV work on *Skins* and *Doctor Who*. "It was this amazing footage of these really intimate interviews he got with this amazing family."

The film doesn't intend to document the broad spectrum of Travelling life. "It's about one particular family," stresses Smith. "But it was important for us to humanise people... I think it's a universal truth, when you're brought up to believe that you're meant to be something, it's very hard to break away from that." Therein lies drama, as Chad struggles to find a way out of the family

business. "I guess it's a very insular place to be within a Travelling community, because they are sort of ostracised," adds Fassbender. "And to leave is even harder than it would be for us to imagine leaving a family."

It's not all gloomy though – from the unusual dialect to the cop-crim tensions, *Trespass* is a lively, energetic affair, not least in the riotous car chases ("Michael's an incredible driver," grins Smith). While the film has yet to be seen by wider audiences, the family at the centre of Siddons' documentary have given their seal of approval. "They thought it was very truthful and authentic," says Smith. "That was our aim with the film, to make something that was truthful and authentic and was humanising people that are often demonised." **MM**

ETA | 3 MARCH / TRESPASS AGAINST US OPENS THIS SPRING.

## FACE-OFF

Chad (Fassbender) wants out of the family thieving business headed by his dad (Gleeson).



**MICHAEL FASSBENDER**

**How did you first become involved in *Trespass Against Us*?**

I read the script, and it was like a slap in the face. I fell in love with the characters. There was an energy and positivity to the writing that really grabbed me from the first page to the last. I met up with Adam [Smith, director], and we had a chat. I could see his passion, his commitment. And that was it.

**Travellers are a community we don't tend to see on the big screen...**

It's still always a problem with Ireland, as well as the UK, between the settled community and the Travelling community. There's quite a bit of friction; they can be at odds a lot of the time; there can be contempt for one another. Nobody really seems to be talking about it or bringing it to the table to discuss.

**Your character's a father. How was it acting opposite the children?**

It's hard not to be playful with Georgie [Smith] and Kacie [Anderson]. They're such full and fun characters. Really, what you see is what they are. Especially when you're improvising with kids, they're just so imaginative and just so smart. They're very fast and sharp-witted. It was hard not to fall in love with them. **MM**



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- UNDERWORLD: BLOOD WARS
- WOLF CREEK'S JOHN JARRATT
- ESSENTIAL HORROR COMICS
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NO LOVE, NO JOY  
Ian McShane's character is a  
"sonofabitch", says *Gods*  
creator Bryan Fuller.

EXCLUSIVE

## MAKE MY DEITY

**AMERICAN GODS** | Bryan Fuller and Ian McShane discuss your new TV obsession (and man-eating vaginas).

**I**f, like *Teasers*, you're still reeling from the cancellation of Bryan Fuller's *Hannibal* series after just three increasingly magnificent seasons, then cling to this: come spring we'll be celebrating the debut of a new show by Fuller, and it's none other than an adaptation of Neil Gaiman's award-winning 2001 tome *American Gods*.

For the uninitiated, *American Gods* sees a man named Shadow Moon (Ricky Whittle) released early from jail to attend his wife's funeral, only to be offered employment by the mysterious Mr. Wednesday (Ian McShane). Is Mr. Wednesday a con man? Turns out he's a great deal more, and Shadow Moon's eyes are

opened to a world populated by mythical gods preparing to do battle with the New Gods of Media, Technology and more.

"It's *Clash Of The Titans* by way of *The Grifters*," says Fuller with a goofy grin. "You can expect something more accessible than *Hannibal*, which was very niche, with an aesthetic as refined as the

character [Lecter]. *American Gods* invites you in – for starters, the main character is not a cannibal. [laughs] Though Mr. Wednesday is a sonofabitch."

"Wednesday asks questions and puts Shadow in strange situations," says McShane. "He's meeting all these other characters who are kind of extraordinary, but in ordinary situations. And then you get that this is not ordinary, and you realise they are creatures from another time, waiting for their time. It could be fabulous."

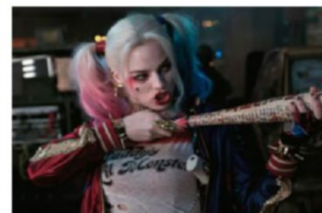
Promising the show has a diverse approach to questions of identity, ethnicity and religion, Fuller says it's also more intimate than Marvel's spectacles. "There won't be any skyscrapers falling," he says. "But there will be men being eaten by vaginas, which is dramatic and exciting in a different way." Quite. **JG**

ETA | SPRING / AMERICAN GODS  
AIRS LATER THIS YEAR.



## SHORT CUTS

What's stopping, what's starting in movieland...



### FOR THE QUINN

In a year of stinkers, *Suicide Squad* was one of the whiffiest. But it made a box-office killing, so attention has turned not just to a sequel but spin-off *Gotham City Sirens*. David Ayer will return to direct the film that teams Margot Robbie's Harley Quinn with fellow Bat-villains Catwoman and Poison Ivy. Geneva Robertson-Dworet (Alicia Vikander's *Tomb Raider*, *Sherlock Holmes 3*) will write.

### POWER TO THE PONOC

Only last month we learnt that Studio Ghibli animation maestro Hayao Miyazaki has returned from retirement to direct 2019's *Boro The Caterpillar*, and now we know what several of the famed animation studio's key players have been working on since: forming Studio Ponoc to create *Mary And The Witch's Flower*, a magical-looking adaptation of Mary Stewart's *The Little Broomstick*. Hiromasa Yonebayashi, (*Arrietty*, *When Marnie Was There*) will direct.

### GOING COCO

We now know the identity of *Coco*'s all-Latino cast. Gael García Bernal, Benjamin Bratt, Renée Victor and newcomer Anthony Gonzalez will play the four key characters. Adrian Molina and *Toy Story 3*'s Lee Unkrich are directing the tale of young Miguel (Gonzalez), whose dream of emulating his music idol Ernesto de la Cruz (Bratt) takes him to the *Land Of The Dead*, where he teams up with trickster Hector (Bernal).

### SMART ATTACK

Gus Van Sant has had a rough ride in recent years, with Matthew McConaughey weepie *Sea Of Trees* shelved indefinitely following a disastrous debut at Cannes 2015, but he's looking to recapture some of the old magic by reuniting with his *To Die For* star Joaquin Phoenix for a biopic about controversial American political cartoonist John Callahan, who was paralysed at 21.







## TRAILER BREAKDOWN

## WEB OF INTRIGUE

**SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING** | Tom Holland's spectacular wall-crawler makes his standalone MCU debut...

01



"Wait a minute, you guys aren't the real Avengers." With wisecracks to rival his powers of observation, Spidey takes on a gang of bank robbers armed with reclaimed Chitauri tech.

02



Laura Harrier plays the apple of Peter's eye (and inevitable homecoming queen) Liz Allan. Also glimpsed here: *Nice Guys* scene-stealer Angourie Rice as Betty Brant, Peter's first love.

03



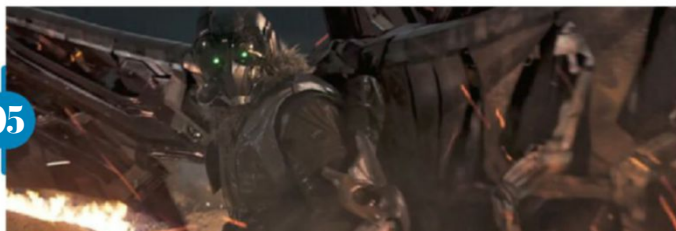
With his cover blown, Peter demonstrates another nifty Stark-tech upgrade – he can slip out of his suit at the touch of a spider-shaped button. Note the vintage *Star Wars* figures over Peter's shoulder.

04



Speaking of suit upgrades: Spidey now has wings – a reference to Steve Ditko's original design. But here they serve a practical purpose, allowing Spidey to glide around Washington in pursuit of...

05



...Adrian Toomes, aka the Vulture (Michael Keaton). Utilising highly effective techno-terror, Toomes takes a hard line with Spidey, "Don't mess with me... I will kill you and everybody you love."

06



The money shot. Robert Downey Jr.'s snark merchant will continue to be a sort of mentor for Peter in *Homecoming*, but it remains to be seen whether Iron Man will get in on the action beyond this flyby. **JF**

ETA | 7 JULY / SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING OPENS THIS SUMMER.





## EXCLUSIVE

## FOOD FIGHT

## IT'S ONLY THE END OF THE WORLD I

Xavier Dolan's divisive drama lands with a bang...

**S**ometimes we decide to make movies that are not *Fast And The Furious 4*," says Xavier Dolan. "It seems necessary to put everyone in a zone a little less comfortable than the ones we've known."

While *Teasers* would certainly be keen to see the French-Canadian director of *Mommy* and *Laurence Anyways* direct Vin Diesel, the point is well made. His latest movie, *It's Only The End Of The World*, is a story of familial discord that split the critics – and then claimed the Grand Jury Prize – when it played at 2016's Cannes Film Festival.

Adapted from Jean-Luc Lagarce's 1990 play *Juste La Fin Du Monde*, it sees Gaspard Ulliel play Louis, the prodigal son who returns home after a 12-year absence to announce that he's terminally ill. Making up his dysfunctional family are some of France's finest: Nathalie Baye (as Louis' mother), Vincent Cassel (as his older brother), Marion Cotillard (as his sister-in-law) and Léa Seydoux (as his sister). "I wrote parts for them, but also, against them," says the 27-year-old, who wanted his formidable cast to play against type.

While many adaptations strive to be cinematic, Dolan was also keen to emphasise the theatrical origins of a story set almost entirely in the family home, framing the actors in intense close-ups. "I think a lot of people are afraid of theatre," he sighs. A voiceover artist on the side, Dolan is quite the

opposite. "Marion has said that I was like the sixth actor of the movie because I'm also acting with them, I'm off frame and I act, and I say the lines and I add stuff."

Already working on his next film – his first English-language tale, *The Death And Life Of John F. Donovan*, starring Kit Harington and Jessica Chastain – Dolan recently announced on Instagram he won't be taking it to Cannes. Mainly because it won't be finished, but he was also hurt by the rapid-fire social media responses to *It's Only The End Of The World*. "It took me five years to love that play. And guess what? I thought it was a bore when I first read it. I thought it was loud and aggressive." **JM**

ETA | 24 FEBRUARY / IT'S ONLY THE END OF THE WORLD OPENS NEXT MONTH.

**A FAMILY AFFAIR**  
Ulliel's long-absent Louis returns to his fractious home of French A-listers, including Nathalie Baye (below) as his mum, to deliver some bad news.



**Q&A**  
**GASPARD ULLIEL**

**Do you see this film fitting into the rest of Xavier Dolan's body of work?**

It does, but at the same time, it's also really different. That's what I like with this one, [it's] a step forward. He started so young. It's like we are growing with him, with each of his films. This one... he calls it a film of maturity, his first film as a man, and it makes sense. There's something pared down, understated. It's brave of him to go and adapt this play.

**It's a truly amazing cast. How did it make you feel to be a part of that?**

It's like the ideal French cast – maybe apart from myself! I was a bit wary about this. After the big success of *Mommy*, we knew that there would be people waiting for us with sniper rifles! Like, "Oh, he's just [doing stunt] casting," so this can be a bit tricky. But when you see the film, straight away you forget about this.

**You're all shot in close-up a lot in *It's Only The End Of The World*. How was that experience?**

It's a bit frightening at first, but also fascinating for an actor to be working like this. It's all about the slightest detail. That's what Xavier's looking for, seeking. Every breath, every eye movement, every inner vibration... it's like a seismograph of emotions! **JM**







# YOU TALKIN' TO ME?

Film quotes pose as questions. Film stars try to cope.

IN THE CROSSHAIRS THIS MONTH: **KATE BECKINSALE**

## Are you talkin' to me?

I mean, I'm thinking about it...

## Do you feel lucky, punk?

I actually do feel quite lucky, punk. Yeah, I do... In the general scheme of the world, no. But I think it's always good to have a small flame of hope inside one's self that things are going to be OK.

## You talk the talk. Do you walk the walk?

Yes, I'm pretty religious about that sort of thing. My worst thing ever in the whole world is bullshit. It makes me furious.

## You either surf or fight...

Yes, I'm afraid it would have to be fight. I'm not really a big surfer. But never say never. There are so many crazy things that have happened to me in my career in the last decade. Possibly yes. But I'm not planning on a *Point Break* moment.

## What's the last thing that you do remember?

Probably something that my mother said to me. Because my mother's voice is quite loud in my head. [laughs]

## Have you ever danced with the devil in the pale moonlight?

I definitely have. Yeah. I probably shouldn't do it again.

## You ever have that feeling where you're not sure if you're awake or still dreaming?

No, but I had one crazy episode of sleep paralysis. Have you ever had that? I had actual auditory hallucination. I had just had lunch with David Walliams, who's a very good friend of mine. And he'd gone off and I went for a nap, because I was exhausted. And I heard him in my hotel room talking to someone, and I thought, "Oh no, they've come in..." Then I went to get up and



## 'MY MISSION IS TO ALWAYS LAUGH. THAT'S WHY I CARRY A PANTOMIME HORSE WITH ME'

couldn't move at all. I thought, "Oh my God, I've actually had a stroke. I've died..." Then I got up and he wasn't in the room, and I called a doctor friend of mine — he's a neurologist — and said, "What the fuck just happened to me?" He goes, "Oh, it's quite a common thing. It's what they used to think was a succubus or whatever — that you can be in a very particular stage of REM sleep and your brain has woken up but your body hasn't yet. So you actually can't move, and people will have visual or auditory hallucinations." I said, "This isn't going to happen again, is it?" Luckily it hasn't. But it was quite a moment, I have to tell you.

## Why so serious?

Yes, quite — why so serious? My mission in life is to always laugh, even if things

are shit. It's why I carry a pantomime horse suit around with me!

## What's your favourite scary movie?

You know, when people ask me questions like this I can't even think of one scary movie. My brain just decides to go, "Fuck you," and short out. What's a scary movie that I've even seen? The first scary movie that I ever saw was on a sleepover at 12 or 13. It was *A Nightmare On Elm Street*. That was fucking scary. That was really scary. It was absolutely terrifying.

## Only two kinds of men get shot: criminals and victims. Which one are you?

I'm HOPING a criminal. Some days I feel like a victim. [laughs]

## I know you can be overwhelmed, and I know you can be underwhelmed, but can you ever just be whelmed?

It's a real life goal. That's the zen path, isn't it? To be whelmed. I'm gonna make that my motto from now on, "Striving for whelmnness." [laughs]

## When you can live forever, what do you live for?

Shame on you for *Twilight*-ing me! Alright... New and interesting apps, presumably. And also a self-driving car... It would be nice to achieve flight. To achieve flying and being whelmed at the same time. That's my goal.

## What will I become?

What will I become? I'm hoping a really interesting old lady. One that has dyed hair and lots of little animals in her pockets. **JMc**

**LYCAN HUNTER**  
Beckinsale is back for a fifth *Underworld* outing as fanged death dealer Selene.

ETA | 13 JANUARY / UNDERWORLD: BLOOD WARS IS OUT NOW.





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EXCLUSIVE

# KELLY'S HEROES

**CERTAIN WOMEN** | Director Kelly Reichardt returns with a multi award-winning drama...

**W**inner of Best Film at the London Film Festival, Kelly Reichardt's sixth feature lays out the tales of three women in small-town America. Laura Dern's lawyer seeks compensation for client Jared Harris; married couple Michelle Williams and James LeGros try to buy some sandstone for the house they're building; and Kristen Stewart's law-school graduate forges a connection with horse rancher Lily Gladstone.

"It was a long process," says Reichardt of picking three Maile Meloy stories to adapt and entwine in the loosest manner imaginable. "I spent a year trying to find stories of hers that worked together, and there was a time in the writing stage where I tied things together more, but it felt so contrived."

Don't expect a Robert Altman-style mosaic. Reichardt resists the urge to repeatedly flip-flop between tales, and refuses to underline themes or amplify events. After the (admittedly low-key) genre thrills of *Night Moves*, *Certain Women* represents a return to gentle slice-of-life dramas *Old Joy*, *Wendy And Lucy* and feminist western *Meek's Cutoff*. Even a hostage situation unfurls with a minimum of fuss: "If you play it in a heightened way, you would lose all interest," explains Reichardt, spotlighting her anti-Hollywood

sensibilities. "My father's a crime scene detective. We always laugh at how heightened those shows are."

The biggest crime in *Certain Women*, though, is the everyday sexism that the characters of Dern and Williams face. It's something Reichardt knows all about. "I spent 12 years trying to get my second film made while my male peers from Sundance '93 went on with their careers," she shrugs. And it never goes away, even when you're an acclaimed filmmaker. "If I'm trying to do something different, people think, 'She doesn't know what she's doing.' If a man does it, it's, 'You're so clever! Look what he's doing!'" **JG**

ETA | 3 MARCH / CERTAIN WOMEN OPENS IN TWO MONTHS. KRISTEN STEWART IS INTERVIEWED ON P102.

## TRIPLE-ACT

Appearing in her third Reichardt film, Michelle Williams' Gina leads one of three tales, the others headed by Laura Dern and Kristen Stewart (below).



**Q&A**  
**LAURA DERN**

### What makes Kelly Reichardt so special?

Very few have her discipline. Even if they choose beautifully a tribe around them, there's always going to be someone who says, "Don't you want to show that more?" or "Shouldn't you make it lighter?" She knows the vision that she wants to tell, and she doesn't stray from it.

### She's the latest in an impressive roster of filmmakers you've worked with...

Todd Haynes, David Lynch, Jonathan Demme, Paul Thomas Anderson, Robert Altman, Steven Spielberg, Alexander Payne... These people are not only my favourite directors, but have become my family members because it takes an incredible level of trust to let them guide you to what they need for *their* movie.

### To what degree have you, like all women, had to deal with sexism?

I'm currently experiencing it just by being an American. Just when we thought we were a new generation. It's a continual fight to be yourself and feel you have a voice. The rhetoric and philosophy has gone back to something we haven't seen in a long time. It's incredible that now we're looking at conversations about the right to marry who you want, and a woman's right to choose. It's terrifying. **JG**





## THE NEXT BIG THING

## HERMIONE CORFIELD

IS IN THE HALCYON DAYS OF HER CAREER.

**H**aving made her film debut in 2014, Hermione Corfield, 23, has already worked opposite Tom Cruise, Ian McKellen and Vin Diesel. “I’ve been really lucky with the big stars,” she smiles, “They’ve never made me feel intimidated.” Before appearing in a couple of 2017 blockbusters, she’s starring in lavish ITV drama *The Halcyon*...

**Tell us about *The Halcyon*...**

*The Halcyon* is a kind of a pacey, modern-ish period drama, set in a five-star hotel in World War 2. It gives you an insight into the masks and fronts that had to be put on in a hotel to maintain standards and keep secrets.

**You’ve got a couple of big films on the horizon, starting with *xxx: Return Of Xander Cage*...**

I play Ainsley, who is a ghost hunter/hacker-type. It’s a really fun role. It happened during *The Halcyon*: I’d fly

out, shoot and then come back and shoot *The Halcyon*. So it was full-on.

**And you’re in *King Arthur: Legend Of The Sword*...**

I play... I’d say we’re kind of like the *Macbeth* witches. There’s three of us. It was a very physical role. It was lots of prosthetics and lots of swimming. I’ve got a scuba Padi for it, which was great.

**Growing up, was it really cool or really annoying to share a name with a *Harry Potter* character?**

Mainly quite annoying, because people would meet you and go, “Wingardium Leviosa.” But also, it can be good because [most people] don’t actually know how to say my name, so I have to say, “It’s like *Harry Potter*...”

**Do you ever get daunted working with big stars?**

Every big star I’ve worked with has been really nice, never made it feel imposing. When I met Kathryn Bigelow was probably the most starstruck I’ve been... I’ve always loved her stuff! **MM**

ETA | JANUARY / *THE HALCYON* AIRS ON ITV FROM THIS MONTH; *xxx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE* OPENS ON 19 JANUARY; *KING ARTHUR: LEGEND OF THE SWORD* OPENS IN MAY.





## CAN WE TALK ABOUT...?

## THE ACE EXORCIST TV SHOW

Many are giving this new take on the classic a wide berth, but they're missing out...

**W**hen Fox commissioned a 10-part TV series of *The Exorcist*, it didn't matter if the show intended to be a loose adaptation of William Peter Blatty's source novel, a reboot of William Friedkin's 1973 movie, or a sequel to it (all three were reported) – "Your mother sucks cocks in Hell" was the blanket response.

Wasn't it enough that we'd suffered through two dodgy sequels and two versions of an expendable prequel, after Paul Schrader's sombre, psychological cut was extensively retooled by Renny Harlin in a futile effort to up the thrills? A TV series would surely be the cherrybomb on top of the shitcake. Or not, as the case spectacularly proved to be.

Set in present-day Chicago, the series focuses on the Rance family.

Brittle mum Angela (Geena Davis) is having potent nightmares, gentle dad Henry (Alan Ruck) is impaired after an accident, and elder daughter Kat (Brianne Howey) is surly and withdrawn. The last thing they need, then, is for cherubic younger daughter Casey (Hannah Kasulka) to be possessed by a cruel, cunning demon, attracting the attentions of Father Tomas

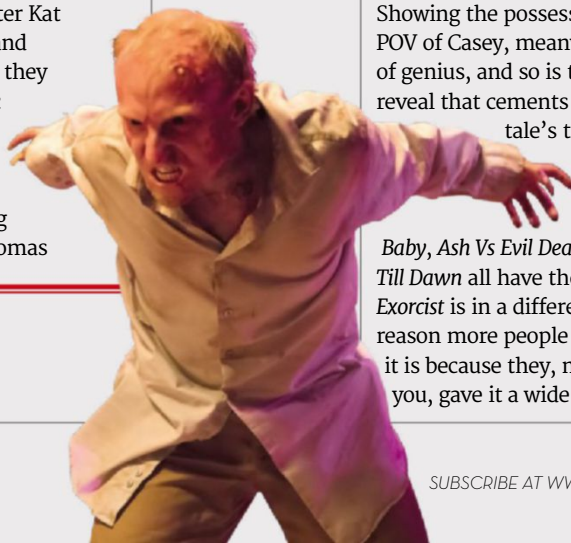
Ortega (Alfonso Herrera), a rising star of the clergy, and grizzled, disgraced Father Marcus Keane (Ben Daniels).

With Rupert Wyatt's pilot setting the house style, *The Exorcist* unfurls as a moody, murkily lit drama spiked with narrative surprises, quality effects and genuine scares, all packaged together with pleasing sincerity. Showing the possession from the POV of Casey, meanwhile, is a stroke of genius, and so is the episode five reveal that cements this all-new

tale's true connection to Friedkin's movie.

The TV shows of Rosemary's

*Baby*, *Ash Vs Evil Dead* and *From Dusk Till Dawn* all have their merits, but *The Exorcist* is in a different league. The only reason more people aren't raving about it is because they, most probably like you, gave it a wide berth. Let it in. **JG**



**'SHOWING THE POSSESSION FROM CASEY'S POV IS GENIUS'**



IN TWO MINDS  
Dan Stevens plays David  
Haller, the schizophrenic  
mutant child of Professor X.

EXCLUSIVE

## X-APPEAL

**LEGION** | Fargo mastermind Noah Hawley talks X-Men on TV and mixing real with fake...

**W**ith *Apocalypse* sequel news suspiciously subdued and Hugh Jackman's last hurrah as Wolverine imminent, the cinematic X-universe is about to enter uncertain times. Not so on the small screen, where new eight-episode series *Legion* casts Dan Stevens as David Haller, the mutant offspring of Professor X. But with multiple timelines, realities and studios involved, is it really all connected?

"There's a mythology to David's origin, and who his father is – that remains our connection," showrunner Noah Hawley explains to *Teasers*. "We've turned it into a fable on some level, so I felt we were safe to play with it."

In other words, don't expect a P-Stew cameo, but do expect one of the trippiest superhero stories yet. As well as the son of the most powerful mutant on the planet, Haller is a diagnosed schizophrenic and has spent his entire life in and out of institutions, the latest of which he's committed to after a Freaky Friday incident with mysterious stranger Syd Barrett (Rachel Keller). Rather than adapt a specific *Legion* comic arc, Hawley worked hard to capture the "underlying spirit" of the character. Specifically, David is a most unreliable narrator. "One thing that television doesn't really do is surreal," Hawley explains. "It's about: can we create something romantic and immersive without being frustrating and obtuse?"

Having picked up major acclaim for his award-winning TV adaptation of *Fargo*, Hawley knows a thing or two about bringing movies to the small screen in smart and unexpected ways. "My approach to this was the same as *Fargo*, which is to say: I was asked to adapt a movie without any of the characters or the story from the movie. So it forced me to think, 'What is a Coen brothers movie? What makes *Fargo*, *Fargo*?' And it was the same with the X-Men."

As the director of the show's pilot, Hawley also brought big-screen flair to the visuals, marking *Legion* out as a show with cinematic aspirations. "I thought a lot about *Eternal Sunshine Of The Spotless Mind* when I was making it: can we do the effects practically? Can we mix things that feel real and things that feel fake? So there was that fun to it: 'Let's take reality out of it.'" **JF**

ETA | 9 FEBRUARY / *LEGION* AIRS ON FOX FROM NEXT MONTH.

## FIRST WORD

# GELF AWARENESS

## THE DARK CRYSTAL 2

| The cult sequel that's heading to comics...

**F**inally coming to the comic-book page if not the big screen, David Odell, Annette Duffy Odell and Craig Pearce's unproduced screenplay of *The Power Of The Dark Crystal* is being turned into a 12-issue mini series by Boom! Studios.

"It's worked out really well because the screenplay really lends itself to being slightly tweaked, especially in terms of the perspective," says writer Simon Spurrier, who is teaming up with artists Kelly and Nichole Matthews. "It makes the story stronger while still maintaining the narrative skeleton which is in the screenplay."

Set several decades after the film, Spurrier tells the tale from the point of view of a new character, Thurma, a fireling who lives deep in the volcanic core of Thra. With the flames that her people depend upon in danger of being extinguished, Thurma attempts to gain a precious shard of the Dark Crystal itself by journeying to the surface world, which is now ruled over by the first movie's two main characters, Jen and Kira, who have grown complacent in their old age.

"If we weren't experiencing the story through Thurma's eyes, she would just seem like a destructive thief," says Spurrier. "There's a lot of cool stuff that kicks off when she does indeed shatter the crystal, and there's hell to pay as you'd expect." **SJ**

ETA | 15 FEBRUARY / *THE POWER OF THE DARK CRYSTAL* RELEASES NEXT MONTH.







EXCLUSIVE

## MARRIED STRIFE

**LOVING** | How a tale of love in a time of prejudice reignited Jeff Nichols' passion for film-making.

**I**n 2012, shortly after the release of *Mud*, Jeff Nichols was at a crossroads. "I'd made enough films to question if I was on the right path or not," he says. A surprising confession for one of the finest writer/directors of his generation. But commercial success – or the lack thereof – had knocked Nichols' confidence. "You start to wonder, 'Do I need to pull the ripcord and make a big studio comic-book movie?'" A perfectly timed dispatch from America's greatest living filmmaker assuaged his doubts. "[*Martin Scorsese*] called me. He'd recommended me to the producers of *Loving*. Having that support is extraordinarily flattering, but it's also invigorating."

Nichols isn't short of vigour today. Sitting with *Teasers* on the Cannes waterfront hours after *Loving* debuted to enthusiastic reviews, he's reflecting on a four-year journey from pacing around his back garden with Scorsese in his ear to world cinema's biggest stage. Inspired by Nancy Buirski's documentary *The Loving Story*, it's the tale of Richard and Mildred Loving (Joel Edgerton and Ruth Negga) whose illegal interracial union was the catalyst for the upheaval of America's archaic marriage laws in the 1960s.

Yet *Loving* is almost anti-Oscar in its restraint, eschewing expectation at every turn. "I was terrified I wouldn't honour them correctly," Nichols says, sitting to attention. "It paralysed me for the first couple of months writing,

because I didn't know enough personal details to fill out all the years." Instead, Nichols remained true to the "essence" of Richard and Mildred, to depict a relationship devoid of grandstanding conflict. "The structure is very odd, because it's just these moments in time – that's what I think marriage is."

The film's commercial prospects may still be limited, but Nichols has a new project in his sights – a remake of '80s cop comedy *Alien Nation*. "I don't want to make movies in any other way than the way I make films. It'll be under those circumstances." **JF**

ETA | 3 FEBRUARY / *LOVING* OPENS NEXT MONTH.

### FORBIDDEN LOVE

Joel Edgerton and Ruth Negga as the real-life Lovings, who fought for the right to be married.



**Q&A**  
**RUTH**  
**NEGGA**

### How much did you draw on footage of the real Mildred?

A lot. I'll forever be indebted to Nancy [Buirski's] documentary, because it's an incredible piece of work. Mildred was quite shy in her appearance and quiet, but just a wonderful spirit. You can tell that there's just this wonderful stoic spirit to her.

### Any difficulty playing an American?

I didn't think of it as a hindrance to my ability to play Mildred at all. I enjoy history and I'm fascinated with American history. I was familiar with the story and that time period. There was no obstacle in being European-African.

### What is it like working on a Jeff Nichols set?

Everyone on this film really was so keen and desperate to do this couple justice. I think that energy psychically supported us on that epic adventure. I felt very looked after, nurtured and championed, by Jeff, and everyone involved.

### How do you choose your projects?

I tend to seek out people I'd like to work with. It doesn't always work out. Francine Maisler cast me in *12 Years A Slave*, which I was axed from. But she mentioned me to [producer] Sarah Green and Jeff. So, it's luck, opportunity and seeking out like-minded spirits. **JF**





## BETWEEN TAKES

## JONNY LEE MILLER

THE T2 TRAINSPOTTING STAR TALKS LIFE ON SET...

**What's the first thing you do when you arrive on set?**

Grab something to eat and a cup of coffee. It's a hard life! And then go and rehearse, go and get hair and make-up done, and get dressed. I might meditate and clear my mind. You've got to get rid of yourself and try and become somebody else for a minute.

**What do you take with you on set?**

Script. iPad. iPod.

**Do you use your phone on set?**

It depends. If things are pretty heavy, then no, I won't have my phone with me, but being a parent, you want to know if things are happening. I don't ever cut myself off from the world, because I'm a parent.

**Any on-set superstitions?**

I don't really have any superstitions at all, other than keeping hats off the bed.

That's my one. If there's a bed in a trailer, I won't put a hat on it. I heard it's bad luck. I've no idea why!

**Best on-set experience?**

Getting together with the guys for T2 has got to be up there, because it's just so surreal and so nice to see such a wonderful group of people again and get to reconnect. But we were conscious that we didn't just want to be having a get-together. We wanted to be making something worthwhile, and we felt that the material was there for us to do that.

**What's the longest day you've ever spent on set?**

I think it's about 16 or 17 hours, and that would've been back doing *Eli Stone*. It was awesome, but we had these crazy fantasy sequences to do sometimes, and when you bring special effects and music and dancing into a scenario it

just takes forever. I remember being there until 4am sometimes.

**Have you ever stolen anything from a film set?**

[laughs] No! But I got a pub sign from *Plunkett & Macleane*.

**What's been your most embarrassing moment on set?**

I have so many of them! But on stage, I've been butt naked in front of 12,000 people a night – and not just walking across the stage, but rolling around like *Frankenstein's* creature – and after that, nothing really fazes me much.

**Best wrap party?**

It was *Trainspotting*. I think it was at the Glasgow Botanic Gardens. That was an epic night. **SD**

ETA | 27 JANUARY / T2 TRAINSPOTTING OPENS LATER THIS MONTH.



## EXCLUSIVE

## SPACEBOY MEETS GIRL

**THE SPACE BETWEEN US** | Brit director casts a wide eye over Mars and America in an intimate sci-fi spectacle...

**I** happen to love CG," says Peter Chelsom, the director behind such eye-saucering spectacles as, er, *Hector And The Search For Happiness* and *Serendipity*. He laughs: "I've used it a lot but people don't notice, which is the best form of CG – if an audience comes out saying, 'God, the CG was fantastic,' you've lost."

Never before, though, has the Brit filmmaker been required to prance with the pixel pixies quite like he does on *The Space Between Us*. The tale of Gardner Elliot (Asa Butterfield), the first human born on Mars, it tracks his arrival on Earth and the wild adventure he embarks upon with street smart Tulsa (*Tomorrowland*'s Britt Robertson).

"There's space travel, stuff on Mars, plane crashes, explosions," Chelsom explains, "and the CG is beautiful: I made the decision to stay wide, be epic and linger. But it's also a coming-of-age film, a romance, an adventure. A large part is a road trip across America

when they go on the run from NASA, trying to find his father. It doesn't try to compete with *Star Wars*. It's a small film inside a big film. It has a Robert Zemeckis-like touch about it – massive scope and a very strong heart."

If it's heart you're after, who better than Butterfield? Described by Chelsom as a "lovely lad", there's an innate sweetness to him, as exhibited in *Hugo* and *X+Y*. Gardner's innocence makes for a perfect fit. "He's literally an alien, and it's his first time on Earth," the 19-year-old Londoner explains. "The first time he's seen the ocean. The first time he's seen a dog. The first time

he's seen more than 10 people in a room. There are so many things we take for granted, but Gardner helps you realise what's so beautiful about Earth."

The thing NASA found most beautiful, though, is that all the science is correct. Yes, Chelsom followed Ridley Scott's example on *The Martian*, working with astro-bods at every turn. "I hate directing without authority," he shrugs. "So this is absolutely what would happen if someone was born on Mars, acclimatising to that gravity, and then came to Earth. The toll on the body would be immense. It's one of NASA's issues [with terraforming Mars]. We did a screening for [space exploration experts] SpaceX and JPL, and they said, 'It's completely right.'" **JG**

ETA | 10 FEBRUARY / THE SPACE BETWEEN US OPENS NEXT MONTH.



'HE'S LITERALLY AN ALIEN,  
IT'S HIS FIRST TIME ON EARTH'  
ASA BUTTERFIELD





## EXCLUSIVE

## VICTIM MENTALITY

**ELLE** | Paul Verhoeven and Isabelle Huppert create the perfect storm...

**B**efore Paul Verhoeven's *Elle* premiered in Cannes last year, you could almost hear the knives sharpening. The director of *Showgirls* and *Basic Instinct* making a film about rape – a comedy, no less? Moral outrage was the least he could expect. “Many people had been predicting that,” Verhoeven tells *Teasers*. “In fact people seem to be very positive and intrigued. Even if they’re a bit disturbed, nobody has been aggressive.”

Now a sprightly 78, the Dutch director has taken on Philippe Djian's 2012 novel *Oh...* – a pitch-dark, psychologically probing tale about Michèle (Isabelle Huppert), the head of a videogames company who is raped in her home by a masked assailant. Almost brushing the incident off initially, Michèle later discovers the identity of the attacker and begins to pursue him in the most unexpected of ways, resulting in some of the most blackly comic scenes you'll see all year.

Initially set in Seattle and Chicago, and scripted by David Birke, Verhoeven wanted to make the film in the studio system, but he met with resistance whenever he pitched the project there. “[*With this story*,] you would expect an American movie to go in revenge mode,” he says. “The third act would be she takes revenge on this man and the movie does the opposite.

She reaches out into accepting a sado-masochistic relationship. Well, that's why no-one wanted to do it in the United States. It's so against the politically correct proceedings.”

While this forced Verhoeven to relocate the film to Paris to make the first French language movie of his career – a linguistic challenge he admits “gave me headaches for six months” – it allowed for a more liberated experience in telling a story that explores the line between abuse and arousal. Still, he's offended that others might think he'd make light of sexual assault. “Even touching a woman when she doesn't like it, basically, is already an introduction to rape and I would never do it in my life... it wouldn't be part of my morals or behaviour.” **JM**

ETA | 10 MARCH / ELLE OPENS THIS SPRING.

## GAME CHANGER

Huppert plays rape victim Michèle, who deals with the assault in an unexpected way.



**ISABELLE HUPPERT**

**Paul Verhoeven is very talkative in person. Is he like that as a director?**

As much as he talks in interviews, he does the complete reverse as a director. It's not a joke, it's not a provocation, but he never said a word to me as we were doing the movie. Really! I promise! He trusted me and I trusted him. Nothing is random with him. Everything is so precise – like any great director.

**Did you feel that with you, Verhoeven and Philippe Djian's book, you had the perfect combination?**

Yes. Sometimes, you have the perfect gathering between the writer, the director and an actress. It's rare but it happens. We were completely in tune from the very beginning. From the moment I read the book, I thought, “It could be a great film, could be a great role.” And we never – whether it was for Paul or myself – tried to force each other to answer questions that don't need to be answered.

**How would you describe your character?**

She's fearless. She has no moral barriers in a way. She has an innocence in the way she goes about this. She doesn't harm anybody. She just wants to understand something about herself, about her sexuality. **JM**



**F**or last month's release of *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story*, Disney opted to hold just one national press screening – on 13 December, at 6.30pm – and declared that the reviews embargo was set for 5pm the same night. For outlets not invited to a solitary, sparsely attended review screening the morning before, this meant opening laptops as the credits rolled and churning out a chunk of words to get it live on websites, meaning craft and consideration had as much chance of flourishing as an ewok under an AT-AT's foot.

The alternative, in these days of social media, was unthinkable: to go away, ponder and dedicate the correct amount of time and care that should rightly be applied to reviewing such a cultural event, all the while knowing that by the time your meticulously sculpted review is up the following morning, the world will have moved on.

## MUTE WITNESS

Embargoes have always been part and parcel of film journalism, with distributors seeking to shine a spotlight on their releases at the paramount time – the lead up to the film's release, obviously, or to mark its premiere at a prestigious festival. But given we're now operating in an era where a wave of tweets and retweets can significantly shape a movie's lifespan in *minutes*, embargoes are more prevalent than ever.

To be fair to Disney, at least the *Rogue One* embargo only proved an annoyance for shoving a rocket up

# IT SHOULDN'T HAPPEN TO A FILM JOURNALIST

Editor-at-Large JAMIE GRAHAM lifts the lid on film journalism.

## THIS MONTH REVIEW EMBARGOES



The race to review *Rogue One* starts... now!

film journos' arses. The situation was, in fact, no different to the press fleeing the Palais in Cannes or the Sala Grande in Venice after the world premiere of the latest Haneke, Dardennes or Sorrentino movie, with the scramble immediately on to get the review live before rival publications beat you to it.

More irksome, if only because they're so ludicrous, are the embargoes that take secrecy to levels only usually entertained by the CIA. Several times I've been invited to hush-hush screenings and asked to not only withhold

the review until a certain time, but to not tell a soul I'm seeing the film. That includes my wife, who doesn't work in the business and has better things to do than broadcast the fact I've just seen Scorsese's *Silence*. And sometimes my colleagues, like I'm expected to vanish from work for three hours and hope that nobody notices.

## ALIEN THREAT

Then there are the unfathomable embargoes that allow you to tweet about the movie immediately but not review it until a date down the line. Is a tweet not a review in 140 characters? Apparently not, because I've before been specifically instructed that my tweets can state opinion but shouldn't review. If there's a difference, it's lost on me – perhaps it's OK to talk generalities, but the Death Squad will be summoned if you use terms like 'neo-noir' or 'mise-en-scène'.

Also odd are the embargoes set for peculiar times. And I don't mean 3am, because 3am in the UK is 7pm in Los Angeles. No, I mean the instance I had an embargo asserting the review could go live at 8.03pm. (*The Telegraph*, btw, put their review up at 8.02pm, which I can only assume sparked global outrage.) But my favourite embargo ever was the one stating that I should not inform "anybody or any entity" that I'd seen the movie. You have to hand it to that particular distributor for covering any and all eventualities. Good job, too – the very next day a loquacious, anti-authoritarian alien landed in my back garden, quizzed me on my recent viewing and readied an announcement to the entire human race... until I waved the embargo in its petulant green face. Phew, that was close.

Jamie will return next issue...  
For more misadventures, follow:  
[@jamie\\_graham9](https://twitter.com/jamie_graham9) on Twitter.

**'THE DEATH SQUAD WILL BE SUMMONED IF YOU TWEET TERMS LIKE MISE-EN-SCÈNE'**





## LISTEN UP

## HOLLYWOOD

This month, Buzz pitches four sequel ideas for *Fantastic Beasts* and *Where to Find Them*.

## TANGFASTIC SWEETS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM

There's plenty of money to be made from product placements as this sequel swaps Bertie Bott's Every Flavour Jelly Beans for a more famous brand of sour gummies. The adventure sees Newt hunting down his favourite sugary treats and, as always with this franchise, both kids and grown-ups will love it so.

## FANTASTIC SPREADSHEETS AND WHERE TO ALIGN THEM

To teach younger fans the importance of responsibility, this follow-up explores the wizarding clerks of the Magical Congress filling out leftover paperwork from the previous film. It might not be exciting to watch, but it's vital to the supervision of the wizarding world. Besides, owls are probably involved somehow.

## BANTS-TASTIC FEASTS AND WHERE TO DINE THEM

With Kowalski's bakery up and running and Queenie's clear talent for magical strudel-baking, the fans demand a food-themed sequel. Imagine *Come Dine With Me* but guest banter will be mostly telepathic. Kowalski's memory must be wiped after every dinner party, so it will be told using reverse narrative a la *Memento*.

## SARCASTIC TWEETS AND WHERE TO TYPE THEM

Harry Potter meets his most formidable monster yet: the internet troll. Combining the imagination of the franchise with J.K. Rowling's skill for elegantly dealing with horrible creatures, it culminates in a battle bigger than anything seen before in the Potterverse. Because this one will feature 140 characters. *ML*



## MY MOVIE LIFE

The films that make **Richard Kelly** sob, evangelise and scratch his head.



## MY DESERT ISLAND MOVIE

Probably the greatest film ever made is **MULHOLLAND DRIVE**. I saw someone refer to it as a horror film in an article and it made me a little angry, because *Mulholland Drive* is so much bigger than any one genre. Yeah, there are things that are absolutely terrifying in *Mulholland Drive*, but it's a love story, it's a mystery, it's a *David Lynch* film. Single genre classifications can diminish films that rise above genre. It's like saying *The Shining* is a horror film. I tend to gravitate towards films that exist in multiple genres.



## THE FILM THAT ALWAYS MAKES ME CRY

The ending of **BARRY LYNDON** always makes me teary, even though there's something very funny about it. I mean, Barry Lyndon is a pretty despicable character, but there's something about the tragedy, and the beauty of it. I just saw *La La Land* and that's a masterpiece. Just amazing. Everything about it, I loved. What an incredibly difficult film to pull off. Damien Chazelle did an extraordinary job. That one hit me really hard. *Inside Llewyn Davis* destroyed me [too].



## THE LAST MOVIE I WATCHED ON A PLANE

On the way here, I watched **MIKE AND DAVE NEED WEDDING DATES** and *Bad Moms*. And then I fell asleep in a wine coma. For planes, the cheesier the comedy the better. I want to switch my brain off. I'll turn on really trashy reality TV, like *Real Housewives*. I'll go on a marathon and watch the whole season. Stuff that I wouldn't normally watch. I wouldn't recommend any of my films on a plane. There's too much apocalyptic energy. Let's keep that on the ground.



## THE MOVIE I WISH I'D DIRECTED

**JURASSIC PARK**. That's one of the greatest ideas for a movie ever. I love Crichton. Have you seen the *Simpsons* episode 'Itchy & Scratchy Land'? All-time top-five *Simpsons* episode. "Welcome to Itchy & Scratchy Land where nothing can possibl-eye go wrong. Wait, that's the first thing that's ever gone wrong..." But I generate so much of my own material I wouldn't know how to do someone else's script. I see something like *La La Land* and I'm so blown away by it. I think, "I want to do something like that."



## MY FAVOURITE MIND-FUCK MOVIE

I just saw **ARRIVAL** and thought it was incredible. It has a twist, obviously. But it's a compliment to the film that it's a couple of steps ahead of you. That movie is asking you to think like a heptapod, which is pretty ingenious. Some people want clarity and get angry if it's not crystal clear. They think it's a fault of the movie. Those people tend to hate my films. [laughs] I try to design these things for repeat viewings. Whether my film is a success or a disaster, at least it'll hold up to repeat viewings.



## THE FILM I LOVE THAT NOBODY TALKS ABOUT

I loved **HOW DO YOU KNOW**. It's an extraordinary piece of writing, has some of his best dialogue and Paul Rudd is incredible. I met [James L. Brooks] the other day. I went to a meeting with a lot of big people, because I'm a member of the Academy and a committee, and I walked in and went, "Oh my God! All these people!" That was a big deal, getting to meet him. *JF*

ETA | OUT NOW / **DONNIE DARKO** 4K RESTORATION IS AVAILABLE ON DVD AND BLU-RAY NOW.





EXCLUSIVE

## FAMILY MATTERS

**20TH CENTURY WOMEN** | Mike Mills' ace new movie riffs on the women who shaped him...

**M**y mum died when I was 33," explains writer/director Mike Mills. "It was really nice to commune with her ghost, or the memories of her in my head, or whatever. But I have a therapist and I do my therapy in those sessions. I make movies for people. I just happen to make personal movies because it's the richest food."

So says the Berkeley-born 50-year-old, whose 2010 comedy/drama *Beginners* was based on his own father's coming out at the age of 75, and whose new movie swings its attention to his free-spirited, feminist mum. Set in California in the late '70s, *20th Century Women* focuses on how Mills was shaped not just by this remarkable woman, but also a neighbourhood artist who assumed the role of big sister, and a best female friend who regularly slept in his bed but insisted that things stay platonic. These incredible women taught Mills "not to be a dick, like other guys", and it needed quite the cast to do them justice...

"Annette [Bening] is perfect," he grins. "She's just the right age,

is totally, beautifully, naturally herself, which is hard to find in a movie star, and has emotional intelligence. Greta [Gerwig] is emotionally vivid and could be in a Howard Hawks movie. And Elle [Fanning] looks like the girls I knew and is just a great actress. There's an emotional hunger, darkness, complexity."

So just how close is the 15-year-old Jamie (Lucas Jade Zumann) to the teenage Mills? "I did skate, I had that Talking Heads shirt, and I did get called an art-faggot," he shrugs. "I also found punk music to be a life-saving, euphoric thing that got me the fuck out of the

### GIRL POWER

Annette Bening and Elle Fanning (below) help Lucas Jade Zumann's Jamie through his teenage years.

suburbs. But he's not me." Big grin. "He's a better-looking version of me."

A near plotless film that more swirls than moves forward, *20th Century Women* took three years to write, with Mills only half-joking when he says his refusal to adhere to formula, instead siphoning memories, is "a fucking ineffective way to work". Casting an indie movie is also tough these days, with the "Star Wars and Marvel universes now populated by the same actors I'm going for". But the kaleidoscopic comedy-drama that has finally emerged is textured and beautiful.

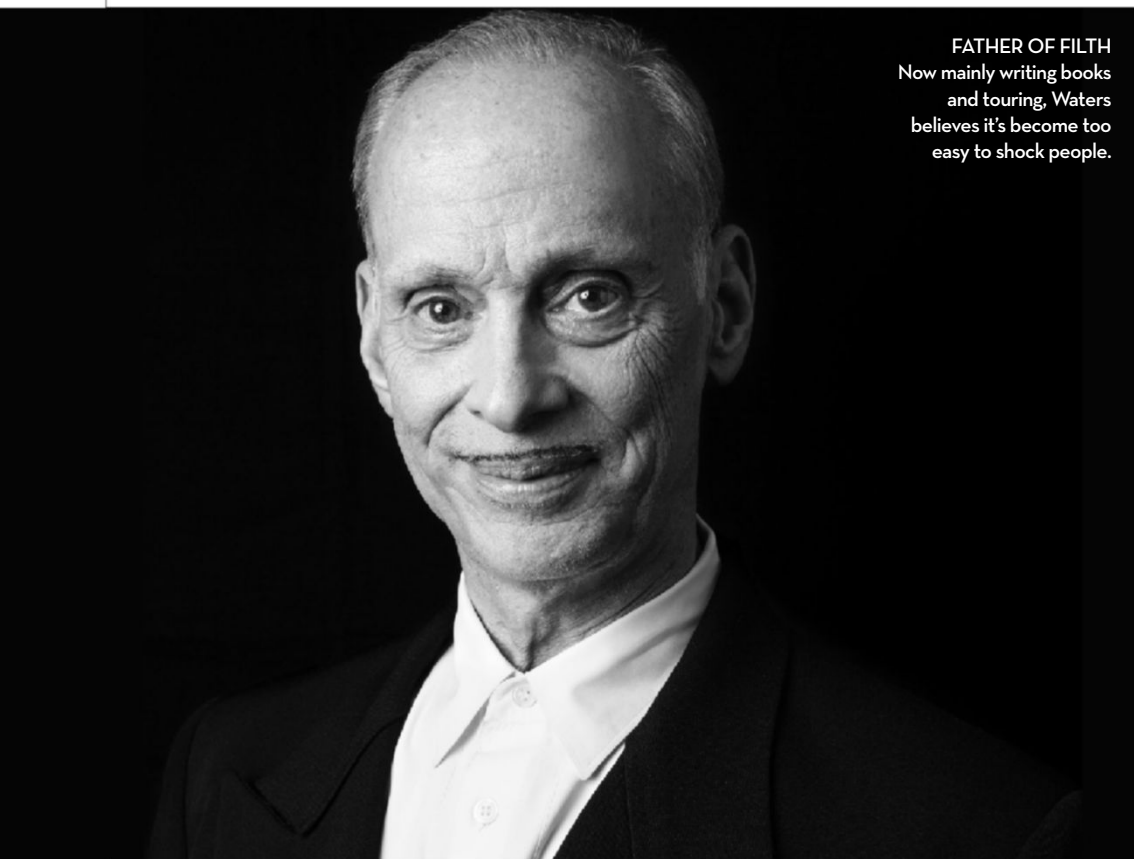
Already nominated for Best Picture – Musical or Comedy and Best Actress (Bening) at the Golden Globes, Mills makes no bones about the fact he'd love to win Oscars.

"It would be great! My film took six years, so any kind of recognition would feel wonderful. As a human, how could you not want to be applauded?" Pause. "But it would be mentally unhealthy to count on any of it." Bigger pause. "It's an interesting mindfuck." **JG**

ETA | 10 FEBRUARY / 20TH CENTURY WOMEN OPENS NEXT MONTH.







**FATHER OF FILTH**  
Now mainly writing books  
and touring, Waters  
believes it's become too  
easy to shock people.

No! I was always aiming for a broader audience. I know that sounds weird. *Hairspray* became more mainstream than I ever imagined. I didn't do that on purpose at all. But once it did, I was always learning how to take the next step, which was to get a Hollywood deal, which I did on *Cry-Baby*.

**What sort of fanbase do you find you have nowadays?**

Little children come up to me who only know me from being in *The Simpsons*. When I ride the subway, most people just know me from being in the *Chucky* movie. So it depends what world I'm in.

**It's been 13 years since your last film *A Dirty Shame*. What have you been up to since?**

I have spoken word shows, I have books, I have journalism, I have art shows... I always need to tell stories. *A Dirty Shame* was not a financial success. But my two last books were on the *New York Times* bestseller list. So I go where they like me. I've also signed a two-book deal. The first book is *Mr. Know It All*. All essays: how to avoid respectability at 70.

**Do you ever feel like making another low-budget movie?**

No, I don't. I'm not going backwards, as a faux underground filmmaker at 70! It doesn't work. At least for me. I've done that. I don't want to go backwards. I have employees. I have to make money.

**Is it harder to shock these days?**

I try and make people laugh and be surprised. It's easier to shock. And that's why I stopped. That's why Hollywood makes \$100 million bad taste comedies that aren't funny. That's why I did an art thing called *Kiddie Flamingos*. I re-wrote *Pink Flamingos* for children. That's the only thing you can do now. Take the most shocking thing you did and make it unshocking, and then it's even more startling! Hopefully.

**Do you feel like you're still as outrageous as ever?**

No, I feel like nothing I say pisses off anybody anymore. Not that I'm trying to – because I'm not mean. As soon as I start ever saying anything mean, I think my career will be over. **JM**

ETA | 17 FEBRUARY / *MULTIPLE MANIACS* IS RELEASED ON DVD NEXT MONTH.

**THE HERO**

# JOHN WATERS

The king of bad taste is back on his throne...

**B**altimore's 'Pope of Trash' John Waters is famed for shocking cult movies such as *Pink Flamingos* and *Multiple Maniacs*, now freshly restored, as well as Hollywood hits such as *Hairspray* and *Serial Mom*. Now 70, Waters is also the author of several books, including best-seller *Role Models*, and performs his spoken word show *This Filthy World*.

***Multiple Maniacs* was your second-ever movie. Is it still your most perverted?**

Kind of! But it didn't get nicer. It was made at the height of the hippie movement to appal hippies – the ones who wanted to be appalled! That's who came to see the movie, hippies!

**How did religious people react to the scene where Divine is pleased with rosary beads in a church?**

Well, I remember the poor priest that let us shoot. He didn't know what we shot. He came [and saw the film] and he was almost crying. I said, "Don't worry, I'll never tell where we shot." And I've never told to this day. And to be honest, I don't even know if I still know!

**What about Divine being raped by a giant lobster? Where did that idea come from?**

That was Theatre of the Absurd, which no-one remembers anymore, which was in the early '60s and a huge influence on me. Surrealism always used lobsters. I lived at the beach in the summer, and there were postcards everywhere – a big lobster in the sky over the beach. The idea came from when we were tripping! It's an LSD idea. I did take a lot of LSD at the time I was making that movie.

**After your underground films, you scored a big hit with *Hairspray*. Were you consciously aiming for a broader audience?**

**'THE LOBSTER CAME FROM WHEN WE WERE TRIPPING. I DID TAKE A LOT OF LSD THEN'**



**BODY OF WATERS**  
(Top to bottom)  
Early Waters shocker  
*Multiple Maniacs*  
(1970); his crossover  
hit *Hairspray* (1988)  
and most recent  
movie, *A Dirty Shame* (2004).



# SOUND BYTES

Quotable dialogue from this month's movies – and their stars

"[WE WON'T REBOOT BACK TO THE FUTURE] AS LONG AS I HAVE MY SAY... THAT ONE EXISTS JUST LIKE *E.T.* – WE'RE NEVER TOUCHING THOSE."

Producer **Frank Marshall** rules out two unwanted reboots.



## 100%

The historical accuracy of Ava DuVernay's Martin Luther King biopic *Selma*, according to a recent study.



## \$2.80

The amount Johnny Depp's films earned at the box office for every \$1 he was paid, making him Hollywood's most overpaid actor.

"WE HAD SO MUCH FUN, AND I'D LOVE TO WORK WITH THAT TEAM AGAIN. BUT I WOULD BE VERY SURPRISED."

**Paul Feig** isn't hopeful he'll helm another *Ghostbusters*.



"WERE BOND TO APPLY TO JOIN MI6 NOW, HE WOULD HAVE TO CHANGE HIS WAYS."



Secret Intelligence Service chief **Alex Younger** wouldn't hire 007.

### IN THE WIND

Hamilton supremo Lin-Manuel Miranda will produce and songwrite for the adap of Patrick Rothfuss' fantasy trilogy *The Kingkiller Chronicle*.



### GOOD THING BAD THING



### BURN NOTICE

After initially targeting a summer 2016 release, *How To Train Your Dragon 3* has suffered a third, ahem, hiccup and will now release on 1 March 2019.

"I THOUGHT A LOT WAS ANSWERED IN *THE FORCE AWAKENS*... I DO FIND IT QUITE FUNNY THAT PEOPLE KEEP ASKING ABOUT IT."

Want to know who Rey's parents are? Rewatch *The Force Awakens*, says **Daisy Ridley**.



"CHOOSE FACEBOOK, TWITTER AND INSTAGRAM AND HOPE THAT SOMEONE, SOMEWHERE CARES."

Renton (**Ewan McGregor**) returns with more rapid-fire life advice in *T2 Trainspotting*.





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★★★★★ HEROIC ★★★★★ HONOURABLE ★★★★★ HAS A GO ★★★★★ SAVE YOURSELF ★★★★★ FUBAR

# BIG SCREEN

THE WORLD'S MOST TRUSTED MOVIE REVIEWS



40

HACKSAW RIDGE

Andrew Garfield saves  
lives (and bullets).





## NEW RELEASES

### OUT NOW

|                              |       |     |
|------------------------------|-------|-----|
| Assassin's Creed             | ★★★   | p52 |
| Crash & Burn                 | ★★★★  | p47 |
| Endless Poetry               | ★★★★  | p50 |
| Live By Night                | ★★★   | p51 |
| Monster Trucks               | ★★★   | p49 |
| Office Christmas Party       | ★★★   | p51 |
| Rogue One: A Star Wars Story | ★★★★★ | p42 |
| Silence                      | ★★★★  | p46 |
| Underworld: Blood Wars       | ★     | p51 |
| Why Him?                     | ★★★★  | p49 |
| The Young Offenders          | ★★★★  | p50 |

### 20 JANUARY

|            |       |     |
|------------|-------|-----|
| Goodfellas | ★★★★★ | p51 |
| Jackie     | ★★★★  | p45 |
| Lion       | ★★★★  | p47 |
| Split      | ★★★★  | p48 |

### 25 JANUARY

|                    |      |     |
|--------------------|------|-----|
| Ghost In The Shell | ★★★★ | p50 |
|--------------------|------|-----|

### 27 JANUARY

|                |      |     |
|----------------|------|-----|
| Cameraperson   | ★★★★ | p49 |
| Christine      | ★★★★ | p50 |
| Denial         | ★★★★ | p47 |
| Hacksaw Ridge  | ★★★★ | p40 |
| Sing           | ★★★  | p50 |
| The White King | ★★★  | p49 |

### 28 JANUARY

|                                                |      |     |
|------------------------------------------------|------|-----|
| Danny Says: The Life And Times Of Danny Fields | ★★★★ | p47 |
|------------------------------------------------|------|-----|

### 3 FEBRUARY

|              |       |     |
|--------------|-------|-----|
| Gold         | ★★★★  | p47 |
| Loving       | ★★★★  | p51 |
| Toni Erdmann | ★★★★★ | p49 |

### ALSO RELEASED

We couldn't see them in time for this issue, so head to [gamesradar.com/totalfilm](http://gamesradar.com/totalfilm) for reviews of the following:

| TITLE                            | RELEASE DATE |
|----------------------------------|--------------|
| The Bye Bye Man                  | out now      |
| Guardian                         | 27 January   |
| Resident Evil: The Final Chapter | 3 February   |
| Rings                            | 3 February   |
| T2 Trainspotting                 | 27 January   |
| xXx: Return Of Xander Cage       | 19 January   |

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**CERTIFICATE** 15 **DIRECTOR** Mel Gibson **STARRING**  
Andrew Garfield, Sam Worthington, Luke Bracey, Teresa Palmer,  
Hugo Weaving, Vince Vaughn **SCREENPLAY** Andrew Knight,  
Robert Schenkkan **DISTRIBUTOR** Lionsgate **RUNNING TIME** 139 mins

# HACKSAW RIDGE

Lone saviour...

★★★★★ OUT 27 JANUARY

**I**n May 1945, in the hellfire battle of Okinawa, army medic and Seventh-day Adventist Desmond T. Doss battled to save 75 men's lives without shooting anyone. In 2016, a troubled star/filmmaker looked to Doss to save his skin too.

## SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

**GALLIPOLI (1981)**  
Gibson stars in Peter Weir's heart-rending anthem for WWI's lost youth.

**THE THIN  
RED LINE (1998)**  
Terrence Malick's Guadalcanal epic meditates on conflict and beauty in nature.

**THE SOCIAL  
NETWORK 2010**  
Andrew Garfield brings sweetness, charm and hidden fire to his Eduardo Saverin.

FOR MORE  
REVIEWS VISIT  
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COM/TOTALFILM](http://GAMESRADAR.COM/TOTALFILM)

Has Mel Gibson earned any reprieve for his grim off-screen rants? That's not something one film will answer, but in telling Doss' story, he re-asserts himself as a director to be reckoned with. Whether you view *Hacksaw Ridge* as a controversial filmmaker's apology, a redemption bid, or a startling, peacenik-slanted variant on the war movie, one thing is sure: between its religious themes (nothing 'subtextual' about Gibson's up-front passions) and its trial by fire of a man's faith, it burns with a bullish conviction that lends punch to its assaults on restraint.

True, clichés mount in the prologue, where the solemn score (by Rupert Gregson-Williams), slow-motion images and deep, meaningful (and vaguely Malick-ian) voiceover set the lay of the land. When the action flashes back a few years to Virginia, where Andrew Garfield's Doss hits on Teresa Palmer's nurse Dorothy with a cheesy line, her wry reply speaks volumes about Gibson's near-hokey portrait of homeliness: "I never heard that one before. It's pretty corny."

## UNARMED TO THE TEETH

But she dates him, anyway – and we're reeled in too, thanks to the combined pull of our lead and his assured director



Garfield is tenacious and hugely likeable as the anti-violence soldier on the frontline.

and writers. Gibson and scribes Andrew Knight/Robert Schenkkan's grip on familiar material is firm; their images, motifs and structural gambits lend purpose to potentially cheesy material. Biblical themes resonate as a young Doss wallops his brother with a rock; his bullying dad (Hugo Weaving) whips him with a belt for his crime. Years on, Doss uses his own belt to help an injured man, his journey to redemption symbolically begun.

A godsend as Gibson's peaceable pilgrim, Garfield imbues Doss' gangly mannerisms and corn-fed dialogue with a winning mix of Gump-speak sweetness and self-certainty. That

certainty is tested in the movie's second act, a shift from home-baked heaven to the purgatory of military training. Between Vince Vaughn's shouty sergeant and the barracks bullies, we've been here before. But Vaughn is more engagingly inquisitive than other, more abusive genre types; and Doss' comrades aren't all brutes. Most are just terrified of war and worried about fighting alongside Doss, who refuses to carry weapons but yearns to go to war and save lives. As Doss is court-martialled for his conscientious objections, the judgement sets up act three's inferno: "You are free to run into the hellfire of battle without a single weapon to defend yourself," he's told/warned.

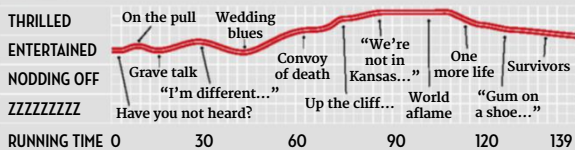
At which point, steel yourselves. After a barrage of bombing, Gibson leads us up a cliff and into a Bosch-ian

## 'STEEL YOURSELVES. GIBSON LEADS US INTO A BOSCH-IAN NIGHTMARE'





## FILM PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE™



nightmare. Between the mud, splayed bodies, bullet-pierced tin hats and torsos used as shields, the Battle of Okinawa pulverises. War has been hell in movies before; this is worse. Staged with grim relentlessness by Gibson, DoP Simon Duggan and sound man Robert Mackenzie, it makes *Lone Survivor* look like *Home Alone*.

### A WINCH AND A PRAYER

When we don't recognise the dead's faces, it's because rats are devouring them. But what impresses otherwise

is how Gibson pushes his direction beyond the exploitative possibilities of raising hell. True, we don't learn much about the enemy: problematically, they are, merely, "the Japanese". But the slow-burn promise of the film's opening acts pays off in a fierce focus on characters we've come to know, played with panic-faced conviction by Sam Worthington, Luke Bracey and others. And it pays off in Doss' actions.

Only ever using a rifle to mock up a stretcher, Doss resembles a man trying to stem Niagara Falls with a teacup on his returns to the field to save lives. "Please, Lord, help me get one more," he begs. And he keeps trying, dodging death to drag the wounded from battle, dress injuries and winch them down a 400ft cliff with a makeshift pulley, staggering like a man drunk on righteous determination.

True, Gibson can't be accused of subtlety. "What you did on that ridge is nothing short of a miracle," Doss is told, lest we missed the religiously freighted images of watery dousings and holy ascensions. But the tensions between faith and fighting are properly seeded, then rammed home with an intense immediacy in the heat of battle. Whether or not that's enough to salve Gibson's shaky reputation, *Hacksaw's* heart-in-mouth climax asserts this much: he's earned our belief in Desmond Doss' astonishing story. **Kevin Harley**

### THE VERDICT

Gibson returns to film's frontline with a ferociously felt anti-war movie, while Garfield invests his Doss with tremendous conviction.





42



**CERTIFICATE** 12A **DIRECTOR** Gareth Edwards **STARRING** Felicity Jones, Diego Luna, Ben Mendelsohn, Mads Mikkelsen, Riz Ahmed, Alan Tudyk, Donnie Yen **SCREENPLAY** Chris Weitz, Tony Gilroy **DISTRIBUTOR** Disney **RUNNING TIME** 134 mins

# ROGUE ONE: A STAR WARS STORY

A Death Star is born.

★★★★★ OUT NOW

**R**ebel spies managed to steal secret plans to the Empire's ultimate weapon, the Death Star..." This vague line from the opening crawl to *Star Wars: Episode IV – A New Hope* is the launchpad for *Rogue One*, Disney's first 'Star Wars Story': a standalone movie that falls outside of the episode structure. If you're looking for an update on Rey, Finn, Kylo and co., you'll have to wait until *Episode VIII*, next Christmas. In the meantime, this is a – whisper it – *prequel*, filling a gap that sets the wheels in motion on the Rebel Alliance's explosive victory in the first movie.

What the original trilogy did so well was hint at a world that was so much bigger than what you saw on screen, so do we really *need* a film like *Rogue One*? Based on this evidence, the answer is a victorious "Yahoo!". Like *The Force Awakens*, *Rogue* has clearly been crafted with care and considerable attention to detail, and it unfurls a fascinating corner in the galaxy far, far away that'll thrill fans as they revel in its meticulous world. It works in its own right as a full-blooded action adventure, though there's no question it'll mean more to those who've pored over trading cards and staged their own standalone stories with action figures.

While the storytelling is relatively lean, the plotting is more complex than *A New Hope*'s opening text would have you believe. We start with a prologue, where the connection between scientist Galen Erso (Mads Mikkelsen) and the building of the Death Star is

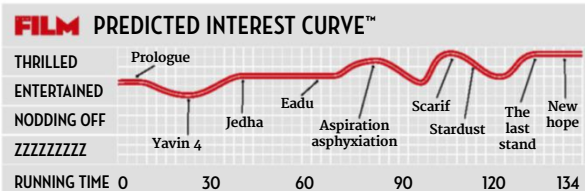
established, and Galen's daughter, Jyn, goes into hiding. As a wayward adult rebel (but not yet a Rebel), Jyn (Felicity Jones) is apathetic about galactic politics, but gets a chance to take a more active role when she's sprung from a labour camp by a faction of the Rebel Alliance. She's one thread in a plan that leads back to Galen, and his designs for the ultimate weapon. It's here the mission begins, and there's no letting up.

## SAW POINT

What first delights is quite how real the world feels. Director Gareth Edwards' previous films *Monsters* and *Godzilla* focus more on human characters than beasts, and *Rogue One* is similarly boots-on-the-ground level. As with *TFA*, the commitment to practical sets, real locations, in-camera effects and creature make-up conjures a tangible world, one that feels very much of a piece with the galaxy you grew up with; *Rogue One* never comes across as an 'alternative' *Star Wars* film. It fits comfortably with the series. Within this very much alive world, the stakes are clearly established, and the tension of intergalactic war hangs in the air. More than *The Force Awakens*, *Rogue One* gives a broader sense of the political landscape, and indeed the war that's playing out in the background: this actually feels like a war film, where loose lips could sink starships, and the line between goodies and baddies is ambiguously shaded.

The casting helps to blur the distinction. *Rogue One*'s central motley crew are individually textured and clearly defined – unlike recent screen teams, such as the *Magnificent Seven* or *The Hobbit*'s dwarves, no one fades into the background. Everyone from Riz Ahmed's defected Imperial pilot to odd-couple warriors Chirrut and Baze (Donnie Yen and Wen Jiang) feels developed, and has a chance to shine without it feeling like arbitrary box ticking. Alan Tudyk steals all the laughs as K-2SO, a reprogrammed Imperial droid who's something like a sassier, snarkier, tougher Threepio. Jones is terrific in a role that's grittier and more badass than anything she's done before, and Diego Luna brings a

Jyn Erso: one of the galaxy's toughest rebels. Also, useless at remembering where she parked...







The morning race for the best sunbaking spots on Scarif Beach is always seriously competitive.

## SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED..

### THE DIRTY DOZEN 1967

Still the yardstick for ragtag ensembles on missions behind enemy lines.

### STAR WARS: EPISODE IV – A NEW HOPE 1977

If you haven't seen ANH before *RI*, you'll definitely want to watch it straight after.

### THE HUNGER GAMES 2012

There's something of reluctant rebel Katniss in Jyn; both battle authoritarian regimes.

FOR FULL REVIEWS OF THESE FILMS VISIT [TOTALFILM.COM/REVIEWS](http://TOTALFILM.COM/REVIEWS)

## 'VIEWERS KNOW THE OUTCOME, BUT IT GRIPS UNTIL THE VERY END'

mercenary edginess to Captain Cassian Andor. The only weak link is Forest Whitaker as *Clone Wars* character Saw Gerrera; his performance is hammier than Babe in a panto, and doesn't quite fit in.

### DARTH BUT NOT STUPID

Even on the Imperial side, sinister character actor extraordinaire Ben Mendelsohn largely reins it in as Imperial weapons head Director Krennic, exuding both menace and the frustration that comes with being a few links down the chain of command. And of course, there's the small matter of Darth Vader's return.

He's infrequently seen but keenly felt, and his brief appearance is catnip for fans, restoring his credibility after he was last seen howling "Noooooooooooooooo!!!" in *Revenge Of The Sith*. The dark lord formerly known as Anakin is one of a handful of callbacks and references. One CG face will provide a fan thrill, even if it's slightly at odds with the otherwise tactile surroundings, and certain crowd-

pleasing references feel a bit more natural than others. Another disappointment to steel yourself for? Trailer breakout star Bistan – the Rebel gunner who looks like the offspring of Chewie and a Critter – has less screen time in the film than he has in the teasers. In fact, several trailer moments don't make the film, which is the only hint at the heavily reported reshoot work that was done on the film. Beyond that, *Rogue One* feels remarkably coherent with no sense of a cut-and-shut job.

The music is also handled with care, even if Michael Giacchino – the prolific composer behind everything from *Inside Out* to *Star Trek*, and *Jurassic World* to *Doctor Strange* – has the unenviable task of being the first person who's not John Williams to craft a *Star Wars* movie score. Naturally, there's nothing quite as memorable as Williams' standouts, and no one gets a theme you'll be humming after the credits roll, but given *Rogue*'s 'outsider' status, this does no harm, and judiciously used snippets of the classic score electrify.

Standalone *Star Wars* stories were always going to carry two innate risks. The first is that they'll feel smaller and less significant than the episodes. The second is the danger that all prequels face: will audiences care if they already know how it ends?

The opening shot confirms that *Rogue One* is anything other than *Star Wars*-lite, and everything from shots of locations, fallen Jedi temples and the Death Star itself feel wholly 'big screen', with Edwards frequently demonstrating his knack for scale. And despite viewers ostensibly knowing the outcome, *Rogue One* grips until the very end. The biggest surprise is quite how emotional it is, with several scenes – and one holo-message in particular – primed to (Force)choke you up.

*Rogue One* might trade heavily in nostalgia but it's bold enough to take risks, and will leave you stirred, fired up and raring for more. Now, if only there was a follow-up we could go away and watch immediately... **Matt Maytum**

## THE VERDICT

Proof that *Star Wars* prequels can work, *Rogue One* is a rousing action-packed epic that's a treat for fans and one of the year's best blockbusters.





Natalie Portman is on awards-worthy form as America's iconic First Lady.

## SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED..

### JFK 1991

Oliver Stone goes looking for answers and finds only conspiracies.

### THIRTEEN DAYS 2000

Kevin Costner has a ringside seat during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

### BLACK SWAN 2010

Portman's most accoladed role to date; will Jackie match it?

FOR MORE REVIEWS VISIT [GAMESRADAR.COM/TOTALFILM](http://GAMESRADAR.COM/TOTALFILM)

# JACKIE

First Lady, first class...

★★★★★ OUT 20 JANUARY

**T**ake a look at this year's batch of awards-friendly biopics (*Lion*, *A United Kingdom*, *Queen Of Katwe*) and you'll see they tend to close with footage or pictures of the real people they're based on. *Jackie*, Pablo Larraín's gutsy, non-linear portrait of Jacqueline Kennedy in the run-up to her husband's assassination, and the aftermath, goes one better by weaving actual archive with its ingenious fabrications, almost as if it's daring us to spot the join.

Witness its recreation of *A Tour Of The White House With Mrs. John F. Kennedy* (1962), a seminal television special in which the First Lady unveiled the results of a \$2m restoration project she personally spearheaded. Up close it's Natalie Portman, flawlessly replicating Jackie's breathy delivery,

**CERTIFICATE** 15 **DIRECTOR** Pablo Larraín  
**STARRING** Natalie Portman, Billy Crudup, Peter Sarsgaard, John Hurt **SCREENPLAY** Noah Oppenheim **DISTRIBUTOR** eOne  
**RUNNING TIME** 100 mins

regal demeanour and wariness in front of the camera. But in long shot it's Kennedy herself, silently participating from beyond the grave.

Anyone who saw Larraín's 2012 film *No* will know how deftly the Chilean director can piece together compelling big-screen stories from historical facts. Yet his English language debut represents a quantum leap, offering a bold new take on one of the 20th Century's most emotive episodes from the viewpoint of the person nearest it.

Like *Sully*, this is a 90-minute film that revolves around a few fateful seconds. Yet screenwriter Noah Oppenheim finds an artful way of forestalling it by having Jackie interrogated by an unnamed reporter (Billy Crudup) who gently coaxes his brittle interviewee into sharing her perspective on the events of 22 November 1963. As we build up to the assassination, we watch snapshots of what went before and after: a musical performance beside her husband (uncanny lookalike Caspar Phillipson),

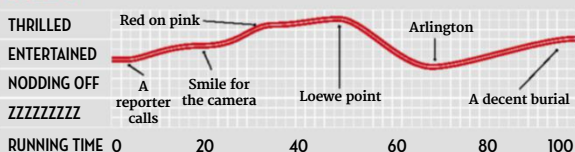
a traumatised Jacqueline accompanying his coffin out of Dallas, and a jaw-dropping sequence of her wandering through an eerily vacant White House, backed by Richard Burton burbling Lerner and Loewe's 'Camelot'. We also watch Lyndon B. Johnson (John Carroll Lynch) being sworn in on Air Force One, leaving Mrs. Kennedy out in the cold before she's even had a chance to wash the blood from her hair.

Less integral is a pace-sapping dialogue between Jackie and a priest (John Hurt) in which matters of faith and fidelity are toyed with. That, fortunately, does nothing to diminish Portman's majestic performance, an act of inhabitation whose embodiment of raw, lacerating grief is matched by the indomitability she displays as America's First Widow. Determined JFK will stand in posterity alongside Washington and Lincoln, Jackie fights through her anguish to give him the funeral he deserves. Larraín, you feel, has crafted her the cinematic tribute she deserves, too. **Neil Smith**

## THE VERDICT

Portman's Oscar-worthy work crowns an unconventional study of an icon, while Mica Levi's score is sublime.

### FILM PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE™







"Listen pal, those aren't the rules to Rock, Paper, Scissors where I'm from."

## SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED..

### MEAN STREETS 1973

Scorsese's most autobiographical film. Stylistically different to *Silence*, thematically similar.

### THE MISSION 1986

Spanish Jesuits – including Scorsese's old mucker De Niro – in the South American jungle.

### GANGS OF NEW YORK 2002

Another historical epic teaming Marty, Neeson and writer Jay Cocks.

FOR MORE REVIEWS VISIT [GAMESRADAR.COM/TOTALFILM](http://GAMESRADAR.COM/TOTALFILM)

# SILENCE

Hail, Marty...

★★★★★ OUT NOW

In his riveting documentary *A Personal Journey With Martin Scorsese Through American Movies* (1995), Scorsese talks of alternating commercial movies with personal ventures – a 'one for them, one for me' policy. *Silence*, more than even the long-gestating *Gangs Of New York*, is Marty's ultimate 'me time', a religious thriller he's wrestled towards the screen for 27 years since discovering Shūsaku Endō's same-titled book. The film finally reaches audiences as his first since *The Wolf Of Wall Street*, which, at \$392m, is his biggest box-office hit. One for them, one for him.

*Silence* follows the 1640 mission of two Portuguese Jesuit priests, Father Rodrigues (Andrew Garfield) and Father Garrpe (Adam Driver), as they sneak into Japan to propagate the outlawed faith of Christianity and search for their missing mentor, Father Ferreira (Liam

**CERTIFICATE** 15 **DIRECTOR** Martin Scorsese **STARRING** Andrew Garfield, Adam Driver, Liam Neeson, Ciarán Hinds **SCREENPLAY** Jay Cocks, Martin Scorsese **DISTRIBUTOR** Studiocanal **RUNNING TIME** 161 mins

Neeson). News, perhaps slanderous, has reached Portugal that Ferreira was tortured until he apostatised by stepping on an image of Christ. Refusing to believe such a thing, Rodrigues and Garrpe arrive to discover a land of crumbled churches and blood-soaked soil.

Stripping back his signature style to deliver a stately epic comprising largely static shots accompanied by next to no score, Scorsese nonetheless enthrals, his priests scuttling over verdant mountains, along roiling coastlines and down mist-wreathed rivers. The near-constant murmur of wind and chirrup of insects are interrupted by hushed, urgent dialogues and a voiceover snatched from Rodrigues' thoughts, prayers and letters home to Father Valignano (Ciarán Hinds), a busy soundscape that makes God's silence all the more deafening. And while the leads' slip-sliding accents can snap the viewer out of this suspense-shivered fever dream – it's hard not to long for Gael García Bernal, Benicio Del Toro and Daniel Day-Lewis, the

cast of the 2009 iteration that fell apart – the craft is flawless.

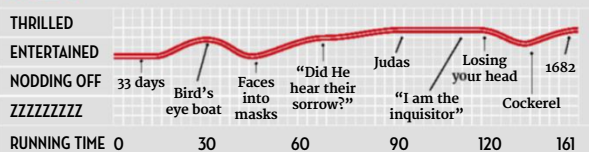
Like *The Last Temptation Of Christ*, *Silence* clashes the spiritual and the practical, the human and the divine. And like *Mean Streets*, *Taxi Driver* and *Bringing Out The Dead*, it searches for God among squalor and violence, with Inquisitor Inoue (Issei Ogata, superb) overseeing abominable tortures of body and soul to quash Catholicism. Set at a time when 300,000 Catholics were forced to relinquish their faith or else practise it in secret, it is now Rodrigues' turn to have his resolve put to the sternest of tests. He is not without pride, and his vision of himself as a Christ-like figure destined for martyrdom is about to be subjected to a rigorous dismantling.

Just how multiplexers will respond to 160 minutes of frequently austere soul-searching remains to be seen, but it is gladdening that Scorsese's own time of questioning and loneliness is over. *Silence* is his communion, and amen to that. **Jamie Graham**

## THE VERDICT

If you want *Goodfellas 2*, be warned this is more *Kundun*, as Scorsese blends his twin religions of Catholicism and cinema to considerable effect.

### FILM PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE™







Despite McConaughey's enthusiasm, Ramírez isn't convinced about his new diet.

**CERTIFICATE** TBC **DIRECTOR** Stephen Gaghan **STARRING** Matthew McConaughey, Edgar Ramírez **SCREENPLAY** John Zinman, Patrick Massett **DISTRIBUTOR** Studiocanal **RUNNING TIME** 121 mins

## GOLD

Hot prospects...

★★★★★ OUT 3 FEBRUARY

**N**ot since Johnny Depp played Raoul Duke in *Fear And Loathing In Las Vegas* has an A-list star tried as hard to be as unattractive as Matthew McConaughey does in *Gold*. Balding, pot-bellied and crooked of tooth, crazed prospector Kenny Wells is so far removed from this actor's former romcom hottie status it almost works against the story. A fact-inspired yarn that sees him brave the jungles of Indonesia, the wolves of Wall Street and a pet tiger without once troubling a breath mint.

Kicking off in 1981, Stephen Gaghan's first movie since 2005's *Syriana* has Wells form an alliance of convenience with Michael Acosta (Edgar Ramírez), a treasure hunter convinced a fortune is waiting to be discovered up river from Jakarta. Couples don't get much odder, yet their breakneck ascent from rags to riches and back again allows writers Patrick Massett and John Zinman to muse absorbingly on matters of friendship, trust and loyalty, even as they're skewering the greed-is-good mentality of Reagan's America.

As McConaughey's gauche girlfriend, meanwhile, Bryce Dallas Howard gets to wear Alexis Carrington shoulder pads in a film whose nostalgic vibe extends to its pitch-perfect synth-pop soundtrack. **Neil Smith**

### THE VERDICT

McConaughey's sweat-stained swagger of a performance in Stephen Gaghan's comeback ensures *Gold* rocks.



### DANNY SAYS: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF DANNY FIELDS

★★★★★ OUT 28 JANUARY

This engaging retro-doc makes a star of journalist/publicist/music exec Danny Fields, who went from hanging out at Warhol's Factory to Beatles controversy (publishing Lennon's "bigger than Jesus" quote) to cutting a record deal for Iggy And The Stooges. Includes rare footage – like Lou Reed's first listen to The Ramones. Muso heaven. **James Mottram**



### CRASH & BURN

★★★★★ OUT NOW

A doc about Irishman Tommy Byrne, "the greatest racing driver you've never heard of". Byrne reflects on his career as a cocky, super-talented driver who missed out on bigger success due, he claims, to underhand Formula 1 politics. Detailing his flair on the track and partying off it, this compellingly explores the question: did he ruin his own chance of greatness, or did others deliberately stall him? **Matt Looker**



### LION

★★★★★ OUT 20 JANUARY

Based on a true story, *Lion* centres on Saroo (Sunny Pawar), an Indian boy who, after getting lost on a Calcutta train, ends up being adopted in Australia. Twenty years on, our hero (now Dev Patel) scours Google Earth for clues to his lost family... Commercials director Garth Davis' debut is a touch over-stretched but impossible to resist – a classy crowd-pleaser with an especially magical first half. **Jamie Graham**



### DENIAL

★★★★★ OUT 27 JANUARY

In 1996, Jewish-American historian Deborah Lipstadt (Rachel Weisz) was sued by British historian David Irving (Timothy Spall) for libel, claiming she'd smeared him as an anti-Semite. Mick Jackson (*The Bodyguard*) mounts a gripping recreation of the court battle, though the film's all but stolen by Spall, deploying a range of expressive snorts and pouts to rival his portrayal of J.M.W. Turner. **Philip Kemp**





McAvoy desperately tries to remember which of his 23 characters is on duty...

## SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED..

### THE SIXTH SENSE 1999

Still Shyamalan's finest hour, whether or not you know the twist.

### IDENTITY 2003

Noirish thriller with dissociative identity disorder at its core.

### FILTH 2013

Another tour de force from McAvoy. Take cover...

FOR MORE REVIEWS VISIT [GAMESRADAR.COM/TOTALFILM](http://GAMESRADAR.COM/TOTALFILM)

# SPLIT

Twenty-three's a crowd...

★★★★★ OUT 20 JANUARY

**M**et Dennis. He wears glasses, has OCD and kidnaps girls from parking lots. Dennis lives in a windowless basement with Hedwig, a nine-year-old who loves Kanye West ("He's my main man!") and keeps hamsters. Dennis and Hedwig are kept in line by Patricia, a prim matriarch who likes sweaters, brooches and carving knives. And then there's Barry, a wannabe fashion designer who freely admits he has "feelings of being overwhelmed".

Then again, Barry might be Dennis. Or Jade, or Samuel, or any one of the other "alters" that live inside Kevin (James McAvoy), a troubled young man whose dissociative identity disorder (DID for short) means he has 23 distinct personalities fighting for his body. Small wonder that his

**CERTIFICATE** 15 **DIRECTOR** M. Night Shyamalan **STARRING** James McAvoy, Anya Taylor-Joy, Haley Lu Richardson, Jessica Sula, Betty Buckley **SCREENPLAY** M. Night Shyamalan **DISTRIBUTOR** Universal **RUNNING TIME** 117 mins

prisoners Casey (Anya Taylor-Joy), Marcia (Jessica Sula) and Claire (Haley Lu Richardson) are as bemused as they are terrified. Not only do they not know why they've been abducted, they also don't know by whom.

We're used to fiendish plots emanating from M. Night Shyamalan, the precocious wunderkind behind *The Sixth Sense* and *Signs* whose career became a rocky road since *The Village* (2004). *Split*, though, might well be his most compellingly warped concoction to date, its genre trappings – think *Room* meets *The Missing* at 10 *Cloverfield Lane* – acting merely as gateway drugs to the altogether more demented thriller taking place within Kevin's noggin. The film's torment of its female leads does border at times on exploitation; on the other hand, it does pave the way for Casey to come into her own, the character's history of abuse giving the nous she'll need if she's to survive this subterranean nightmare.

Taylor-Joy, so impressive in *The Witch*, is even finer here as a deceptively

docile captive whose passivity masks both intelligence and gumption. Yet it would be foolish to suggest this is anything but James McAvoy's movie.

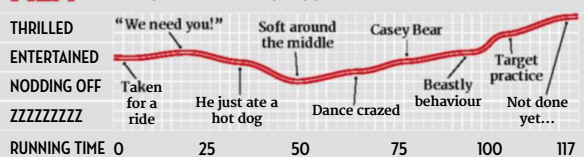
In a role that's effectively a dozen performances in one, the *X-Men* actor is simply astounding. Chillingly cold one moment, malevolently mumsy the next, he offers the modern equivalent of Alec Guinness' turn in *Kind Hearts And Coronets*: a masterclass in physical dexterity and vocal control that builds towards a volcanic eruption of bestial, vein-bulging ferocity when yet another, submerged personality comes bubbling to the surface. (He is also very funny, grace notes such as Patricia's conspiratorial winks and Hedwig's lisp – "eck-thetawa!" – ensuring each persona can both tickle and unsettle.)

It's too early to say if *Split* marks the beginning of a return to form for Shyamalan; after all, he's let us down before. But by the end, those who've stuck with him throughout will have ample cause to feel their faith was justified. **Neil Smith**

## THE VERDICT

This is a Shyamalan movie through and through. And it's his best in some time, thanks to a magnetic McAvoy.

### FILM PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE™







**CERTIFICATE** 15 **DIRECTOR** Maren Ade **STARRING** Sandra Hüller, Peter Simonischek, Michael Wittenborn, Thomas Loibl **SCREENPLAY** Maren Ade **DISTRIBUTOR** Soda Pictures **RUNNING TIME** 162 mins

# TONI ERDMANN

Kind of a wig deal...

★★★★★ OUT 3 FEBRUARY

**A** German comedy? That's nearly three hours long? And centred on a sixty-something father, Winfried (Peter Simonischek), donning fright wig and buck teeth to inveigle his way into the work-focused existence of his estranged, middle-aged daughter, Ines (Sandra Hüller)? The joke's on us, right?

Wrong. Winner of the International Critics' Prize at Cannes and dozens of gongs since, *Toni Erdmann* balances warm-heartedness, goofy humour and broad set-pieces with sadness, loneliness and mental illness. It's a stunningly sophisticated (but accessible) work set in an authentic environment – even when colleagues attend a naked party to take cringe-com to new levels – and it questions the very function of humour (salve, weapon, defence mechanism?) without ever capping up its themes. Also, its writer/director Maren Ade refuses to buy into Winfried's trite belief that Ines needs a husband and kids to find happiness.

Favourite for the Best Foreign Language Film Oscar, it's already rumoured for a Hollywood remake. Alexander Payne could perhaps cope – there's a touch of *About Schmidt*, with added belly laughs – but it'll likely be diluted down to a simplistic crowd-pleaser. Best catch it now. **Jamie Graham**

## THE VERDICT

Strikingly original, brilliantly acted, this serio-comic masterpiece constantly swerves expectations.



### CAMERAPERSON

★★★★★ OUT 27 JANUARY

Veteran doc cinematographer Kirsten Johnson offers a rich tapestry of her work. Whether they're a family returning to an ethnically cleansed area, a teenager in an Alabama health clinic, or a midwife in a rural Nigerian hospital, Johnson's compassion shines through, while the images raise vital ethical questions about the responsibilities of the nonfiction filmmaker. **Tom Dawson**



### MONSTER TRUCKS

★★★★★ OUT NOW

*Ice Age*'s Chris Wedge swaps animation for live action with this fun creature feature, in which a squid monster at risk from an oil concern takes refuge inside teenager Tripp's (Lucas Till) SUV. Rob Lowe provides colour as a Southern-accented sleazeball, while the *Free Willy* finale has enough vehicular mayhem to excuse its dodgy FX. *Transformers*-lite for *Finding Dory* fans who can't wait to drive. **Neil Smith**



### THE WHITE KING

★★★★★ OUT 27 JANUARY

Young Djata (impressive first-timer Lorenzo Allchurch) lives in the Homeland, an agrarian-fascist state. His dad's been hauled off by the police; his mother (Agyness Deyn) copes bravely. Co-directors Alex Helfrecht and Jörg Tittel devise a convincingly scary dystopia crossing Nazi Germany with Stalin's Russia. Too bad Helfrecht's script lets it down, being episodic and, in its final stretch, inconclusive. **Philip Kemp**



### WHY HIM?

★★★★★ OUT NOW

Bryan Cranston and Megan Mullally are the straight-laced parents introduced to their daughter's (Zoey Deutch) new beau – swearsy tech millionaire Laird (James Franco). Uh-oh... Written/directed by *Meet The Parents* scripter John Hamburg, *Why Him?* may get defined by its gross-out moments (a tea-bagging by a moose – don't ask) but it's a smart gen-gap tale with loveable characters. **James Mottram**





**CERTIFICATE** 15 **DIRECTOR** Antonio Campos **STARRING** Rebecca Hall, Michael C. Hall, Tracy Letts, Maria Dizzia **SCREENPLAY** Craig Shilowich **DISTRIBUTOR** Curzon Artificial Eye **RUNNING TIME** 120 mins

## CHRISTINE

A headline performance from Hall...

★★★★☆ OUT 27 JANUARY

**I**t's more than four decades since Florida news reporter Christine Chubbuck tragically took her own life live on air. Curiously, in the last 12 months we've already had *Kate Plays Christine*, a documentary about an actress researching Chubbuck's life and death. Now comes this (far superior) biopic, a meticulously constructed psychological drama from Antonio Campos (*Afterschool*, *Simon Killer*) boasting a show-stopping turn from Londoner Rebecca Hall.

Intelligently scripted by producer/first-time writer Craig Shilowich, Campos' film introduces Chubbuck as a loner who still lives with her mother (J. Smith-Cameron), has an unfulfilled yearning for a colleague (Michael C. Hall) and is sidelined by her boss (Tracy Letts) at the Sarasota TV network where she works. But that's just scratching the surface of a complex, unsettled woman frequently trying to present different versions of herself to whoever enters her orbit.

Cinematography, costumes and design all contribute to a sickly '70s palette reflecting Chubbuck's increasingly fractured state of mind. But it's Rebecca Hall that arguably deserves the greatest praise; she practically devours her role in a way she's rarely, if ever, been allowed to do on screen before. Expect to see her feature in this year's awards-season conversation. **James Mottram**

### THE VERDICT

Deftly assembled and impressively performed, Campos' film fully fleshes out the woman behind the newsdesk.

Rebecca Hall has never been better than in this tragic, true story.



### SING

★★★★☆ OUT 27 JANUARY

*Son Of Rambow* director Garth Jennings plays it disappointingly safe with this entertaining but ultimately disposable 'toon about an all-animal singing comp. *Creature Comforts* with music and an A-list cast (McConaughey, Witherspoon, Johansson), it'll play best to undemanding youngsters. Jennings casts himself as Miss Crawly, a doddering lizard whose rogue eyeball practically steals the show. **Neil Smith**



### ENDLESS POETRY

★★★★☆ OUT NOW

Picking up directly after 2013's *The Dance Of Reality*, veteran auteur Alejandro Jodorowsky (*El Topo*) continues his filmic memoirs. Charting his life in '40s Chile as he flees his oppressive father, Jodorowsky (played by his son Adan) finds himself in the middle of a Bohemian subculture. Mixing meta-theatre, existentialism and an infectious joie de vivre, this is both darkly hilarious and deliciously surreal. **Tim Coleman**



### THE YOUNG OFFENDERS

★★★★☆ OUT NOW

Name-to-watch Peter Foott's rib-tickling story of two teens who cycle from Cork to Kerry in search of a washed-up bale of cocaine is as potty as its premise and as endearing as its leads. It's also unexpectedly touching, the bond between Conor (Alex Murphy) and single mum Mairead (Hilary Rose) proving as crucial as that between him and his bestie Jock (Chris Walley). **Neil Smith**



### GHOST IN THE SHELL

★★★★☆ OUT 25 JANUARY

With the Scar-Jo remake imminent, what better time to revisit Mamoru Oshii's iconic 1995 anime? A 2029-set tech-noir, in which Major Motoko Kusanagi (Atsuko Tanaka) hunts hacker Puppet Master, often opting to fight naked, as you do. Most alluring are the crumbling neon cityscapes, real world/cyberspace fusion and the musings on identity. **Jamie Graham**





## UNDERWORLD: BLOOD WARS

★★★★★ OUT NOW

The fifth entry in the vampires vs. werewolves saga sees Selene (Kate Beckinsale) attempting to end the feud as all parties hunger for the power of her daughter's blood. Charles Dance lends gravitas and Tobias Menzies is effective as new Lycan leader Marius, but monotony soon sinks in thanks to sidetracking flashbacks, trite dialogue and snigger-inducing seriousness. **Rob James**



## OFFICE CHRISTMAS PARTY

★★★★★ OUT NOW

Despite throwing the big-screen bash to end all big-screen bashes (boozy water coolers, Christmas-tree jousting, *IRON THRONES*), this ultimately scores low on laughs. Kate McKinnon, Jennifer Aniston and Jillian Bell run away with the show, and it becomes thrillingly surreal. But note to Santa: next year, more Aniston using Krav Maga, less Olivia Munn spouting techno-babble. **Josh Winning**



## GOODFELLAS

★★★★★ OUT 20 JANUARY

Scorsese at his all-cylinders best, this 1990 classic charts the rise of real-life wannabe mobster Henry Hill (Ray Liotta) under the wing of a bunch of older wise guys (Robert De Niro, Joe Pesci, Paul Sorvino). The set-pieces are deservedly famous: the Oscar-winning Pesci's meltdowns, the nightclub Steadicam shot, Hill's frantic final day. "To be a gangster was to own the world," says Hill. You almost believe him. **Philip Kemp**



## LOVING

★★★★★ OUT 3 FEBRUARY

Ruth Negga and Joel Edgerton play Mildred and Richard Loving, interracial spouses arrested for their marriage in Virginia, 1958. Their case made history at the Supreme Court 10 years on, but don't expect courtroom histrionics from Jeff Nichols' (*Midnight Special*) first-ever true-life drama. Sensitively directed and subtly acted, this modestly radical romance is a soft-spoken beauty. **Kevin Harley**

**CERTIFICATE 15 DIRECTOR** Ben Affleck **STARRING** Ben Affleck, Sienna Miller, Chris Messina, Zoe Saldana, Elle Fanning **SCREENPLAY** Ben Affleck **DISTRIBUTOR** Warner Bros **RUNNING TIME** 129 mins

# LIVE BY NIGHT

Hit and rum...

★★★★★ OUT NOW

**S**erved up for Oscar delectation, Ben Affleck's third polymath drama certainly looks like the kind of picture that could win gongs on production values alone. Adapted from Dennis Lehane's superior crime noir novel, *Live By Night* follows the fortunes of Boston bad boy Joe Coughlin (Affleck) as he trifles with powerful mobster Albert (Robert Glenister) by getting with his girl, Emma (Sienna Miller, standout).

As good as dead in Beantown and having hardened during a stint in prison, Coughlin moves to Florida's Ybor City to run rival gangster Pescatore's (Remo Girone) rum-running op, carve out an empire and look great in period costume against a mangrove backdrop. Violent, thematically weighty (prostitution, the Ku Klux Klan, religious revivalism and miscegenation all get screen time) and pertinent to current events (a speech to a bank manager about the working man is on the nose), Affleck's elegant paean to Hollywood classics recalls *The Night Of The Hunter* in brooding atmosphere and *The Untouchables* in scope and swagger.

With Robert Richardson's beautiful lensing and Jess Gonchor's sumptuous production design nailing the period and steamy sense of place, it looks as rich as the molasses in Pescatore's sills. Yet despite various beautifully orchestrated set-pieces, narratively the whole thing feels as oddly empty as a prohibition liquor bottle. **Jane Crowther**

## THE VERDICT

A handsome prestige pic that's gorgeous and evocative yet curiously cold. So hard-boiled it's emotional impenetrable.



Life rule one: never mess with a guy in a white suit.



**CERTIFICATE** 12A **DIRECTOR** Justin Kurzel **STARRING** Michael Fassbender, Marion Cotillard, Jeremy Irons, Michael K. Williams **SCREENPLAY** Michael Lesslie, Adam Cooper, Bill Collage **DISTRIBUTOR** 20th Century Fox **RUNNING TIME** 115 mins

# ASSASSIN'S CREED

The knife guys...

★★★★☆ OUT NOW

**N**ine games, 17 spin-off titles, short films, novelisations... Ubisoft's *Assassin's Creed* series is a multi-platform monster. So it was only a matter of time before Hollywood got its hands on this centuries-spanning saga. Surely mindful of videogame movies' ropery reputation – Duncan Jones' *Warcraft* being the latest disappointment in an increasingly long line – Ubisoft, which is on board, has made efforts to buck the trend.

## SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

### THE FOUNTAIN 2006

Past, present and future converge in Darren Aronofsky's epic genre-masher.

### PRINCE OF PERSIA: THE SANDS OF TIME 2010

Silly, camp videogame fun, with Jake Gyllenhaal chasing an all-powerful dagger.

### MACBETH 2015

Kurzel, Fassbender and Cotillard get down-and-dirty for the Bard's Scottish play.

FOR MORE REVIEWS VISIT [GAMESRADAR.COM/TOTALFILM](http://GAMESRADAR.COM/TOTALFILM)

The creative team gathered here is mouthwatering: Aussie director Justin Kurzel reunites with Michael Fassbender (who also produces) and Marion Cotillard, who both starred in Kurzel's 2015 muddy, marvellous Shakespeare adap *Macbeth*.

Factor in Jeremy Irons, Charlotte Rampling and Brendan Gleeson and you have an undeniably impressive roll call. But does the finished product fly? Well, yes and no. Ambitious and stylish, it's a loving recreation of certain elements that have made the series so popular among gamers. But emotionally it's inert, Kurzel and co. struggling to make us care about these characters caught up in this chase for the so-called Apple Of Eden.

We kick off in Andalucía, Spain, 1492, where captions lay down the central premise: the Apple, said to contain the genetic code to man's free will, is being sought by a group known as the Knights Templar. Standing in their way are the Assassins, a secret society ("We work in the dark to secure the light") fronted by the ultra-limber, tattoo-clad Aguilar (Fassbender).

As fans will swiftly gather, *Assassin's Creed* isn't about Desmond Miles or any of the leads from the games. It instead creates a new character: Callum Lynch (also Fassbender), a present-day killer who, it turns out, is the last descendent of the Assassins brotherhood.

## MEMORIES OF MURDER

Spirited from Death Row to a facility in Madrid, Cal is monitored by Dr. Sophia Rikkin (Cotillard) and her father (Irons), who want to access the ancestral memories lodged in his DNA. Why? "To pioneer new ways to end violence," Cal's told – an intriguing notion frustratingly underexplored in the

script by Adam Cooper and Bill Collage (who co-penned *Exodus: Gods And Kings*) and Michael Lesslie (Kurzel's *Macbeth*).

Locking into a device called the Animus, Cal is whisked back 500 years into Aguilar's storyline. As Aguilar runs, jumps, fights and climbs, so Cal does the same – becoming stronger and more agile as he's manoeuvred around the lab by a giant pincer. It's one of the film's more impressive visual motifs, brilliantly realised – as are the so-called "bleeding effect" hallucinations, during which Aguilar appears to be in the same room as Cal.

Returning to the 15th Century, where Aguilar and his fellow Assassins are looking for the Apple amid a story that involves the young Prince of Granada, the Spanish Inquisition and the burning of religious heretics, Kurzel captures the feel of the game



**'IT'S A LOVING RECREATION OF THE SERIES, BUT EMOTIONALLY IT'S INERT'**

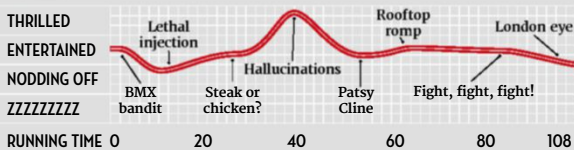




That strap's gonna be a nightmare for tan lines in the Spanish sun.

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## FILM PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE™



impressively. From stealth moves to POV arrow-firing to gravity-defying leaps, there's exhilaration to spare.

### OMAR GOODNESS

The problems lie with the frequent back-and-forth, ensuring no real rhythm is ever established between past and present. As the *X-Men* movies proved, Fassbender is perfectly adept in physical blockbuster roles, but even he struggles with Cal, a character with “a pre-disposition to violence”, with whom it's rather difficult to develop

any meaningful connection (even when Brendan Gleeson turns up as his dad).

Irons and Cotillard are engaging presences, but have little to work with here. Their father-daughter relationship, and the differences that divide their approach to science, are explored in the most cursory of fashions. Better are the others in the Rikkens' facility, in particular Michael K. Williams (Omar from *The Wire*), who plays one of Cal's fellow inmates (with a third-act surprise up his sleeve).

Perhaps the biggest issue is the very centre of the story. The war between the Assassins and the Knights Templar, and the quest for the Apple, never feels tense or high stakes. A final segment in modern-day London (shot in the stunning Freemasons' Hall) ought to lead to an explosive climax, but you can't help feeling underwhelmed by

a story that never fuses its connective tissue into anything significant.

The set-up, of course, suggests a sequel may be forthcoming – but the past/present nature of the *Assassin's Creed* games suggests the difficulties that blight this adaptation would dog any future film. Still, credit Kurzel and his regular DoP Adam Arkapaw for recreating the spirit of the series. In an age when Hollywood has apparently little regard for the legions of gamers who love these titles, they've tried to protect their interests. If only they'd had a better script... **James Mottram**

### THE VERDICT

**Valiant, but flawed. Some of the set-pieces are superb, but there isn't enough meat on the bones to turn this into a classic.**



# BOX OFFICE CHARTS 28.11.16 – 18.12.16



## ROGUE ONE: A STAR WARS STORY

Those deleted scenes: Jyn wailing that her stormtrooper doll needs new triple As; Krennic ordering Rebel logos on all Death Star loo roll; Chirrut weeping that he and the Force are "on a break".



## BAD SANTA 2

So much hype and expectation and excitement, and what did we end up with? A load of unfunny crudity and reheated material. But enough about *Big Screen's* Christmas lunch!



## A UNITED KINGDOM

Amma Asante's movie is sure to draw awards attention, particularly at the Baftas. Who'll be this year's Rising Star? Tom Holland? Margot Robbie? Is the leotard pig from *Sing* eligible?

## UK TOP 10

| Pos | FILM                                             | THIS MONTH | SINCE RELEASE | WEEKS OUT |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------|------------|---------------|-----------|
| 1   | <b>Rogue One: A Star Wars Story</b> ★★★★★        | £17.3M     | £17.3M        | 1         |
| 2   | <b>Fantastic Beasts And Where To Find...</b> ★★★ | £14.9M     | £44.9M        | 5         |
| 3   | <b>Moana</b> ★★★★★                               | £6.9M      | £6.9M         | 3         |
| 4   | <b>Sully: Miracle On The Hudson</b> ★★★          | £5.7M      | £5.7M         | 3         |
| 5   | <b>Allied</b> ★★★                                | £2.7M      | £4M           | 4         |
| 6   | <b>Office Christmas Party</b> ★★★                | £2.3M      | £2.3M         | 2         |
| 7   | <b>Arrival</b> ★★★★★                             | £1.6M      | £8.9M         | 6         |
| 8   | <b>A United Kingdom</b> ★★★                      | £1.5M      | £2.1M         | 4         |
| 9   | <b>Bad Santa 2</b> ★★                            | £1.1M      | £1.9M         | 4         |
| 10  | <b>Trolls</b> ★★★★★                              | £0.9M      | £22.7M        | 9         |

## US TOP 10

| Pos | FILM                                             | THIS MONTH | SINCE RELEASE | WEEKS OUT |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------|------------|---------------|-----------|
| 1   | <b>Rogue One: A Star Wars Story</b> ★★★★★        | \$155M     | \$155M        | 1         |
| 2   | <b>Moana</b> ★★★★★                               | \$80.8M    | \$161.9M      | 4         |
| 3   | <b>Fantastic Beasts And Where To Find...</b> ★★★ | \$51.5M    | \$207.7M      | 5         |
| 4   | <b>Office Christmas Party</b> ★★★                | \$31.5M    | \$31.5M       | 2         |
| 5   | <b>Arrival</b> ★★★★★                             | \$24.1M    | \$86.5M       | 6         |
| 6   | <b>Doctor Strange</b> ★★★★★                      | \$21M      | \$226.1M      | 7         |
| 7   | <b>Allied</b> ★★★                                | \$20.8M    | \$38.5M       | 4         |
| 8   | <b>Manchester By The Sea</b> ★★★★★               | \$12.4M    | \$14M         | 5         |
| 9   | <b>The Edge Of Seventeen</b> ★★★                 | \$11.2M    | \$14.2M       | 5         |
| 10  | <b>Hacksaw Ridge</b> ★★★★★                       | \$10.6M    | \$62.8M       | 7         |



## ALLIED

With audiences expressing resistance, Pitt and Cotillard's WW2 romance isn't exactly the new *Casablanca*; a Zemeckis, however, is still a Zemeckis. You just might not remember this one.



## OFFICE CHRISTMAS PARTY

These days, Christmas movies seem to be targeted principally at adults rather than kids. What next? 'The Bipolar Express'? 'Home Alone With A Bottle Of Gin'? 'Shingles All The Way'?



## THE EDGE OF SEVENTEEN

Hailee Steinfeld's received major praise for her performance, as has her veteran co-star – proof, after his twin turn in the *Now You See Me* sequel, that one Woody Harrelson is better than two.

# STILL OUT, STILL GOOD... OUR PICK OF THE MOVIES OUT NOW



## LA LA LAND ★★★★★

"Damien Chazelle's follow-up to *Whiplash* is a fervent movie, at once old and new, joyous and heartbreaking, personal and universal. Sing it from the rooftops."



## MANCHESTER BY THE SEA ★★★★★

"Kenneth Lonergan (*Margaret*) cements his rep as one of the most vital voices in US cinema. Refusing to simplify or sugarcoat, this drama packs a real wallop. A triumph."



## MOANA ★★★★★

"Despite Dwayne Johnson's scene-stealing, the wave-taming title character gets a true hero's journey in this South Seas stunner. Visually dazzling and big-hearted."



## A MONSTER CALLS ★★★★★

"If this isn't the biggest tearjerker of 2017, we're in for a distressing year. Effortlessly cinematic, this is, ahem, tree-mendous fantasy from *The Impossible's* J.A. Bayona."



# COMING SOON THE BIG HITTERS ON THE CARDS FOR NEXT MONTH...



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## LOGAN

OUT 3 MARCH

**U**nless you count Adam West as Batman (on and off for 50 years, including cartoons), no one's superhero tenure can compare with Hugh Jackman as Wolverine: 17 years, nine movies. Pretty good going, given he was cast three weeks into filming the first *X-Men* (replacing Dougray Scott), not to mention all the time-hopping/fiddling the franchise has undergone. *Logan's* being hyped as Jackman's final mutant go-around; signs of The End being nigh include his failing healing ability and big grizzly beard. Plus a general lack of other X-Men, aside from Patrick Stewart's Professor X, who's not looking too hot himself. If the trailer's any indication, we'll be clawing tears from our faces come the credits.



### THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE OUT 10 FEBRUARY

After the disappointments of *BVS* and *Suicide Squad*, Bats strikes back with a movie that only needs to be half as funny as the trailers to succeed. Thrillingly, it looks like they've crammed in every character in the Bat-verse. See page 74 for more behind-the-bricks insight.



### JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 2 17 FEBRUARY

Cinema's coolest assassin since Léon continues his 'retirement' with a Rome-set sequel that sees Keanu Reeves reunited with *Matrix* mate Laurence Fishburne, as the Bowler King. Who probably isn't the gent his John Steed-evoking name suggests. See *TF254* for more.



### FIFTY SHADES DARKER OUT 10 FEBRUARY

Will it be a case of sloppy seconds, or *A Bigger Splash* for the further sexploits of Christian and Anastasia? Either way, expect a big opening: like the 2015 original, it's out for Valentine's, and couples will probably opt for this over the *Taxi Driver* re-release.



# Belle du Jour

A tale as old as time but never more pertinent in these dark days. Total Film talks Trump, trolling and tyranny with the team behind the Mouse House's multi-layered and dark live-action update of **Beauty And The Beast**, designed to speak to everyone, not just little girls. And don't call Belle a Disney princess, OK? **WORDS** JANE CROWTHER



# BEAUTY AND THE BEAST





# COVER STORY

# N

New York City, 14 November, 2016. It's a beautiful, crisp day in Manhattan – chilly with bright blue skies, Central Park aglow with russet leaves and sun glinting off the skyscrapers. The sort of picture-perfect autumnal day on which you could imagine people bursting into song and performing a joyous dance around the Bethesda fountain. And yet, a pall of discombobulation hangs over the city. Just days earlier, Donald J. Trump has sensationally been voted US president, leaving Democrat-voting New York, and the world, reeling.

It's all any cab driver, deli server or barista can talk about. And yet, *TF* and the *Beauty And The Beast* (BATB) team are in the swishy Loews Regency hotel on Park Avenue to chew the fat about a fairytale. Doesn't this seem a little fatuous at times like these? "The tale of a vain, spoiled rich kid, a billionaire who lives in a luxury tower and treats women as objects... is possibly relevant," jokes Dan Stevens grimly.

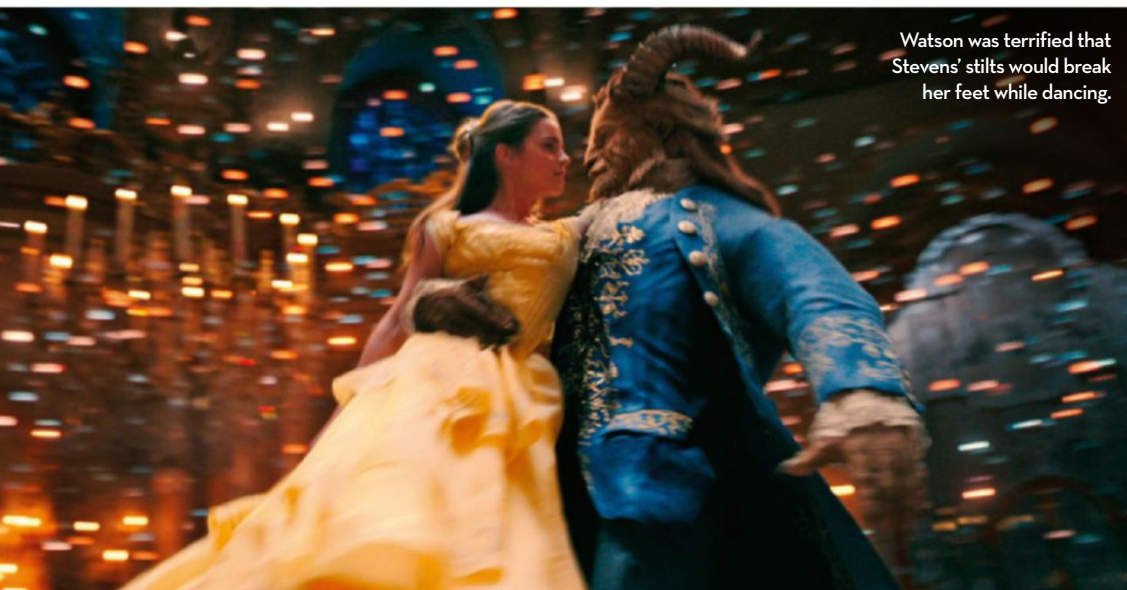


Rewind 26 years to (relatively) simpler times, when George Bush Sr. was POTUS and Disney was primarily an animation house (it wouldn't buy Marvel until 2009, or Lucasfilm until 2012), routinely sprucing up classic fairytales for modern audiences. *BATB* came hot on the fins of blockbuster hit *The Little Mermaid* (which Disney is also remaking in live action) and spearheaded a Disney renaissance of animation features (*Aladdin* and *The Lion King* followed), which turned the studio's fortune around after a run of commercial disappointments, making

monster-hit money and gaining serious critical praise. Like the diminutive fishgirl, *BATB*'s Belle wasn't a meek Disney princess, but an active, feisty protagonist, who, as Roger Ebert rejoiced, "Thinks and acts independently, even rebelliously, instead of hanging around passively while the fates decide her destiny."

Twinning a more modern sensibility with Broadway pros Alan Menken and Howard Ashman's catchy tunes, *BATB* was a game-changer for Disney. It kept ticket-stub pace with *Robin Hood: Prince Of Thieves* and *Terminator 2* at the box office that year, and nabbed an unprecedented nom for Best Picture at the Oscars (*Silence Of The Lambs* won) while bewitching a generation.

With numerous re-releases since, it's become a bona fide classic – so naturally ripe for reinvention when Disney began its live-action back-catalogue cannibalisation. Kicked off by 2010's *Alice In Wonderland* – with *Maleficent*, *Cinderella* and *The Jungle Book* following – *BATB* was initially intended as a tune-free family drama like Kenneth Branagh's *Cinderella*, which stripped the songs but not the passivity of the shoe-dropping heroine. Until *Chicago* and *Dreamgirls* director Bill Condon signed on in 2014 and this sweet story of an imprisoned girl falling for an enchanted prince in beastly form became, well, more interesting.



Watson was terrified that Stevens' stilts would break her feet while dancing.



# BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

## FANTASTIC BEASTS

The story of hottie and nottie has been around for yonks...

### Second Century AD

The tale of Cupid and Psyche in Roman novel *The Golden Ass* inspired the key parts of the *Beauty And The Beast* fairytale as Psyche, the fairest woman in the world, enrages Venus and is sent to a mountaintop to wed a beast, then gets trapped in a castle and misses her family.

### 1550

An Italian compendium of fairytales, *The Nights of Straparola*, features a story called 'The Pig King', which follows a bewitched prince who is turned porcine and must find a wife who loves him as a porker to break the spell.

### 1740

The first telling of *La Belle Et La Bête* by Gabrielle-Suzanne Barbot de Villeneuve is published in *La Jeune Américaine Et Les Contes Marins* (*The Young American And Marine Tales*), a collection of fairytales.

### 1742

Pierre-Claude Nivelle de la Chaussée's play, *Love For Love*, adapts Barbot de Villeneuve's fairy story for French theatres and is a huge hit.

### 1756

The most well-known iteration of the tale is the condensed and revised version by Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont in *Magasin Des Enfant* (*Shop Of Children*).

## 'THE TALE OF A VAIN, SPOILED BILLIONAIRE... IS POSSIBLY RELEVANT'

DAN STEVENS

**IN THE SHADOWS**  
Belle first meets the Beast in a very dark place, emotionally and literally.

"There are no directives about this. I took my own council," says Condon. "Everything had to be translated from an animated world into a real world, so that people's behaviours, motivations, the way they spoke – all of it needed to be rethought."

### HEIGHTENED BEHAVIOUR

Taking some inspiration from Jean Cocteau's 1946 classic but wanting to make an "unapologetic musical", Condon was no stranger to turning what may be niche to mainstream. "It's not so different to me to when I saw *Crouching Tiger* the first time," Condon says of the universal appeal of a sing-song gig. Um, what now? "It was heightened. Action movies are like that too. It's the kinetic charge of watching heightened behaviour and emotion. The challenge with musicals, and why you've got to be careful, is just... they're corny, and they're just about things that make you cringe. That's the challenge – to give it a toughness."

The '91 original's appeal did cross genders and generations to a degree. "It's the one [Disney film] that a lot of guys come up to me and they're sort of willing to admit that's a film they really, really like," admits Stevens. While Luke Evans says, "I can mention I'm playing Gaston and somebody will sing a line straight away from that song."

Nevertheless, getting it to operate outside of mere family fodder parameters is a tough sell.

But Condon is confident he's crafted a film that will engage adults and kids, men and women alike. "It's a darker universe" he says. "It's scary," when comparing it to preceding live-action adapts. "The wolf battle and the Beast are intense. We really wanted to feel that curse come to life." His Beast agrees. "There needs to be [darkness]," Stevens nods. "Belle brings the Beast out of the shadows. She isn't afraid of the darkness. Cinematically, it was something Bill was really going for."

The key to the whole tone, then, was Belle. A bibliophile who has no interest in the town stud, being defined by her gender or bowing to social norms, this Disney heroine needed a specific balance between empowerment and empathy. Emma Watson had turned down Disney's live-action *Cinderella*, bowed out of *La La Land* due to scheduling issues and was looking for a project she could help to mould.

Though *Pocahontas* was her favourite Disney growing up, she was keen to get a crack at Belle – so much so that she put herself on tape singing two of the songs as an audition for the role. "It gave me more of a sense of ownership," Watson says. "I would have hated to have felt I got the part undeservedly. I had to prove I had the voice to do it."





# COVER STORY



Unusual for an actor of her stature to audition this way? “Not for a musical,” shrugs Condon, “Beyoncé did that [for *Dreamgirls*]. Renée [Zellweger] sang over dinner [for *Chicago*]. You can’t take it on faith that somebody has a voice that’ll work. But when we first met, Emma volunteered. She said, ‘OK, get me the script and I’ll get you a tape.’”

## HOLMES AND WATSON

Getting the script was important to Watson, a high-profile feminist who has worked with the UN on empowering women (see page 64), and wanted to ensure that this version of Belle was no pushover. “I just felt the character of Belle resonated with me so much more than Cinderella did,” she recalls, shivering in the NY cold in a luxe caramel coat. “I don’t feel like I particularly fitted in when I was younger. There’s this kind of outsider quality that Belle had, and the fact she had this really empowering defiance of what was expected of her. In a strange way, she challenges the status quo of the place she lives in, and I found that really inspiring. And also, she manages to keep her integrity and have a completely independent point of view. She’s not easily swayed by other

people’s perspective; not swayed by fearmongering or scapegoating. I think Bill knew I had concerns about the script, that there were things I needed to see. It was very collaborative.”

While Watson worked making Belle more proactive, Condon cast fellow Brit Dan Stevens as the Beast having worked with him on *The Fifth Estate* and admired his post-*Downton Abbey* work. “I don’t think he knew whether I could sing or dance, but he had great faith in me. And I’m forever grateful to him for that,” says Stevens, bashfully. (“I knew he could sing. He then proved it. He did his own audition,” Condon recalls.)

The director filled out his cast with his *Mr. Holmes* lead, Ian McKellen, as enchanted clock Cogsworth (“He was tickled and delighted”), and Ewan McGregor as saucy French candelabra Lumiere, (Condon admits his accent sounded ‘Mexican’ first time around so McGregor spent time with a vocal coach and returned to re-record his vocal, which is now “a flawless, beautiful French accent”). The Angela Lansbury update, singing teapot Mrs. Potts, Condon cast Emma Thompson, who also helped with script tinkers as she did on *Bridget Jones’s Baby*. “I think she’s that warm spot of everything cosy and lovely about [British] culture.”



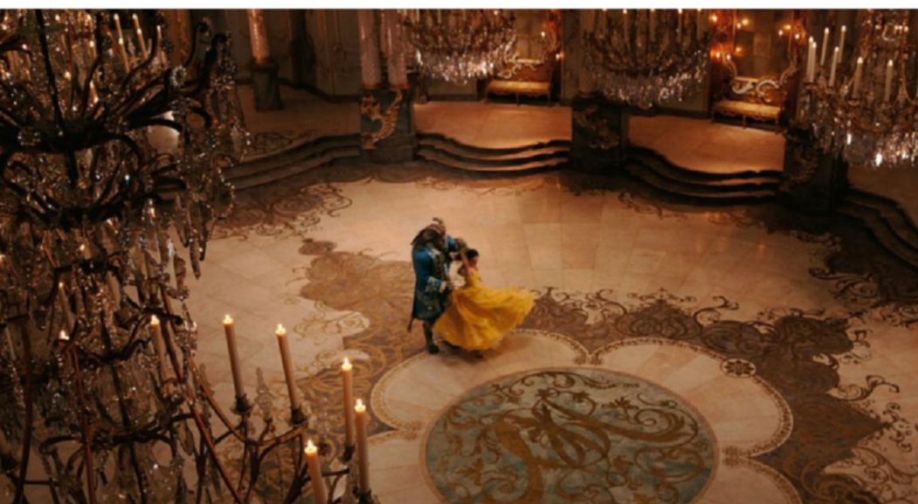
**ALPHA FAIL**  
Luke Evans pulls no punches as the arrogant, chauvinist “sex pest” Gaston.

“There were little tweaks throughout,” recalls Watson, gold-ringed hands waving animatedly. “The core DNA of Belle is a feminist, and that’s Linda Woolverton, who was the first female writer who wrote for Disney. Belle was actually based on Katharine Hepburn at the time. At the beginning of the process, we sat down and we talked through the script and we went through script notes – with Dan and I and Bill, Emma and Kevin [Kline, playing Belle’s inventor dad]. We really got to have some input there.”

Hold up... is this 21st Century revisionism of a family favourite going to threaten what made it so popular in the first place? No, insists Watson. Belle has always been a modern woman and an equal-opportunities champion. “It’s not like I’m changing who she is in any way. That was always who she was understood to be.” Stevens agrees, “It’s not like Belle’s suddenly tweeting!” What she is doing is wearing sturdy boots instead of impractical ballet slippers, inventing designs of her own alongside her father, matching the Beast in witty and intellectual bantz and

## ‘BELLE CHALLENGES THE STATUS QUO. SHE’S INSPIRING’

EMMA WATSON



### 1771

French opera *Zémire Et Azor* borrows from the *Beauty* story as a shipwrecked merchant finds an abandoned palace, picks a rose from the gardens for his beautiful daughter and incurs the wrath of the owner, a hulking horror...

### 1858

Russian folktale *The Scarlet Flower* features a young woman, Nastenka, trapped in a castle by the Beast after her father picks a flower from the grounds of his castle. In 1952 it was made into an animated film, which was restored in 1987.

### 1946

Jean Cocteau’s monochrome classic *La Belle Et La Bête* stars Josette Day (pictured, right) as Belle, who’s hassled for marriage by her brother’s friend (a Gaston pre-cursor) but is soon caught up with the Beast

(a taxidermy-ed Jean Marais). Features Cocteau directly addressing viewers and an enchanted candelabra. Roger Ebert calls it “one of the most magical of all films”. In 1994 Philip Glass writes a new soundtrack for the film.

### 1962

Edward L. Cahn’s *Beauty And The Beast* reinvented the story as a monster movie with Mark Damon’s Beast turning into a werewolf, with make-up by SFX legend, Jack Pierce.

### 1978

Children’s book *Beauty: A Retelling of the Story of Beauty and the Beast* by Robin McKinley refreshes the story for US audiences, as does her 1997 follow-up *Rose Daughter*.





### Horns

"We were careful about the horns. We certainly didn't want him to feel like a ram or anything like that. We looked at a bunch of different shapes and lengths and widths and positions on the head; coming forwards versus going back; so many different things before we settled on where we ended up."

### Fangs

"We just went with the approach of not being so drastic in our animal-like qualities – not making the fangs too aggressive, and picking our moments where he went to a more angry state. We didn't want them to read like tiger fangs – we didn't want him to feel so animalistic that it would be unsettling to Belle."

### Height

"Our Beast is around 6ft 10in and if you measure to the top of the horns, closer to 7ft 4in. We played around with a lot of different heights – putting Dan on different sized stilts and standing him up against Emma. What was an appropriate relationship? Much larger than her, but not crazy. And that spatial relationship had to be maintained during filming."

### Tail

"Yes, he does have a tail! We were weary of drawing too much attention to it because we want everyone to see him as a romantic lead; we didn't want that to be distracting at all. But it is in the movie. We paid attention to it. It was a costume consideration as well, because we tried trousers that would have a hole cut out for the tail to come through. It was hard to avoid it looking silly. We ended up going mostly with capes and jackets. I think that was befitting of the time."

### Legs

"The Beast's [digitigrade] leg movement was the most challenging thing to get right. We tried to mock it up with a human in stilts but they always looked strange. So we had to be freeform in how we let all those joints move, especially when you have to crescendo to the waltz, and you have to understand that if he was determined to move elegantly and smoothly, he could. And then there's a couple of instances where he's on all fours, where he's going up and down stairs, running, leaping or dancing. It's just a really wide range of movement that we needed to nail, and to the point where it just somehow felt natural."

### Fur

"The fur was probably one of the most time-consuming considerations. A lot of time was spent on his face – it registered in so many different ways and so many different lighting setups, and even just some different facial expressions. We needed to keep it short enough where you could read his brows and expressions, but not so short that you didn't really understand that he was a fully furred creature. We have a combination of long hair and short fur so we looked at bear fur, wolves, coyotes and yak hair – like, how wiry does the hair need to be? How does it move? How thick is it? How matted?"

### Eyes

"It was really important to Bill and to Dan from early on that we should see Dan's eyes, because we figured that's really how Belle is ultimately going to realise there's a man behind the mask. It even helped Emma, knowing that the eyes looking back at her [during filming] were going through to the final product. When we were stuck on a shot we went back to the dailies and really keyed in on Dan's eyes and what he was doing; where his focus was narrowing, where his pupils were dilating, where he was squinting. His eyes were the guide for the visual effects work."

## NATURE OF THE BEAST

VFX producer Steve Gaub talks through the Beast design. Tail and all.

"The '91 [version] and the stage adaptation *Beast* is so beloved, but because ours is live action, we had to take on more animal-like characteristics and visuals than either of those did – without going so far as to make him not be endearing and charming. We wanted all the emotions to register of a wounded, tortured prince stuck in this curse. The beast isn't a composite of specific animals. We just took inspirations, like how the hips of a lion moved and how a bear looked upright. But really, it all played into more of a free-thinking approach to making something pretty much altogether unique." **JC**

### Style

"Shoes were a definite no! We spent a lot of time on his clothes. When we come upon him, you can tell he's someone who hasn't really had to care about his appearance for any reason at all – so he'd just grab some drapery and wear that. And then he realises there's an attraction to Belle, and he does his best to shape up a little bit, wears some ill-fitting things that were probably the Prince's before he turned into the Beast. And nearer the end, he engages the help of his castle staff to woo Belle. So then we let it be a more romantic, well-fitted costume."



# COVER STORY

➔ still fending off sexual predator and unreconstructed misogynist, Gaston (Evans), plus his foolish sidekick, Le Fou (*Frozen*'s Josh Gad).

## THE REAL BEAST

Gaston hasn't got any more enlightened in 26 years. "Yeah, he's a monster," smiles Evans, while puffing on a vape and looking suitably macho in rugged work boots and a chunky sweater. "He's a sex pest. He's an arrogant, misogynistic, boisterous... just awful! We didn't tone him down. I think we did the opposite. Everything he does, he does extreme. There was no point trying to find a way to tone it down."

Menken and new lyricist Tim Rice (Ashman died in 1991) did update Gaston's famous solo though, adding new lyrics to further enhance Gaston's standing as a self-absorbed buffoon. And Belle's rejection of him is all the more important in a world where the new US president boasts of sexually abusing women. "Emma's done some amazing things, and she's brought that energy to Belle. She's made her a 21st Century Disney princess, which doesn't necessarily mean getting the guy is the be-all-and-end-all, which I like," muses Evans. "I think that's very important – which means even more so she wouldn't end up with Gaston."

"He's a white male chauvinist. He's like patriarchy in a man," Watson says. "I think audiences will have a lot of



### TOOTH BE TOLD

The Beast's gnashers were intentionally made to be not too animalistic.

laughs at his expense, but also the scene where he's inciting the villagers to go kill the Beast... it's very familiar. I think it's going to really freak people out, because it'll really speak to fear-mongering, scapegoating. It'll really draw some very important and deep parallels to what's happening now." Condon agrees, "The kind of mob mentality that takes over is pretty resonant, you'll see in the way we play it. I think it'll make some connections."

"Yeah, the timeliness of this is horribly apt," grimaces Stevens. And not just politically, of course. The rise of social media, body-shaming, trolling, online bullying and various iterations of Gamergate have meant that the central theme of *BATB* – to not judge or attack

based on exteriors – is just as pertinent. "I think we need stories like this more than ever," sighs Watson.

It's not all doom and gloom though. While this fairytale offers modern parallels and messages, it's also a good old-fashioned romp. An antidote if you will. Condon promises that all the emotional and dramatic beats from the original are hit – and no amount of feminist restructuring is going to affect the ballroom dancing scene that was so groundbreaking for its use of CGI in 1991, and such a classic scene for fans. It was the scene that gave Condon goosebumps during the table-reading of the script when Watson actually got up to dance the sequence. And the scene that took the most preparation, given Stevens was performing on stilts, in a muscle suit and using state-of-the-art performance-capture tech, MOVA.

"[Emma and I] spent a lot of time together learning to dance. Several hours a day for two months," recalls Stevens. "Learning the steps, then learning in stilts. I think our respective vulnerabilities shone through and helped bond us. We had a lot of interesting conversations in the months leading up to shooting. The kind of Belle she wanted to portray, I really wanted the Beast to fit the other half of the yin/



### 1983

Stevie Nicks' second album, *The Wild Heart*, features ditty 'Beauty And The Beast', based on Nicks' love of Cocteau's movie. "Timeless is the prisoner in disguise..." she warbles.

### 1987

Rebecca De Mornay plays Beauty in *Beauty And The Beast*, one of a series of modern-set Cannon Movie Tales; while Linda Hamilton does the same on TV as a legal eagle falling for lion-faced Ron Perlman.

### 1991

Disney's musical breaks box-office records and becomes the first animation to get a Best Picture nod at the Oscars, where it took home the gong for Best Score.



### 1994

Disney's blockbuster is adapted for stage and packs 'em in on Broadway until 2007. During its run Hugh Jackman plays Gaston and admits to an unfortunate incident of peeing himself in front of audiences after hydrating too much before a strenuous number.

### 2007

Alex Flynn's YA novel *Beastly* shifts the tale to modern Manhattan and is told from the Beast's perspective. It's made into a risible film starring Alex Pettyfer and Vanessa Hudgens in 2011.



yang. I had no desire to be a Beast that didn't play opposite that idea." Although Watson jokes that during the scene, all she could think about was not getting her toes broken by Stevens' 'steel-toed stilts', it was a day that cemented the project for other cast members. Gad felt a chill observing them in twirling action because, "We were like, 'This is the moment we know the film is going to work.'"

It's been 18 months since Watson and Stevens took a spin around the dance floor, and the sequence has been painstakingly brought to CG life (see page 61). Watson has taken a year off acting and 2016 has become one of *those* years, filled with war, terror, political upheaval and monetary uncertainty. The *BATB* team hope the nostalgic warmth and reinvention of their project

## 'WE NEED STORIES LIKE THIS MORE THAN EVER'

EMMA WATSON

will bring some cheer in the early winter months of 2017. "This is Disney's gift," says Evans, without a trace of irony, eyes bright. "To give someone a trip down memory lane with a few added extras, courtesy of technology and CGI that is mind-blowing. I've done the best of CG that there is. I've worked with the biggest magicians that there are when it comes to that sort of stuff, and this is up there, if not surpasses what I've worked with in the past. It's so real. It's so believable. It's magical." He sits back and smiles. "It's just magical..."

And if the record-breaking numbers of us viewing the trailers are anything to go by, we could all do with a bit of that in our lives right now.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST OPENS 17 MARCH.

### 2012

The tale gets a graphic novel spin with *Fashion Beast* by Alan Moore, Malcolm McLaren and Antony Johnston. It was based on a screenplay that Moore wrote in the '80s while working on *Watchmen*.

### 2014

Bond girl Léa Seydoux essays Belle opposite Vincent Cassel's panther-like Beast in director Christophe Gans' little-seen classic take, *La Belle Et La Bête*. **JC**



## Q&A SHAKIN' STEVENS

Dan Stevens talks getting his singing and dancing Beast on.

### Why do you think this story is so loved?

It really has a universality that people get very, very excited about. The animated movie came out when I was a kid. It was really great. It was really well done. I think every generation has its own telling of this. It captures a lot of imaginations at once. It certainly captured mine.

### You sing in this – are you a karaoke king?

Oh God no! [*My wife and I*] sing with the kids. My wife is a great singer. It was a lovely thing for us to connect over. She coached me for the audition, and we sang a lot when we were doing this. But no, karaoke, I'm not big a fan of!

### You spend most of your screen time as the Beast, but do you keep close to the look of Prince Adam from the the '91 version?

Yeah, my Falco look! There are certain things that people expect and [*the hair*], I'm sure, is one of them. If he was to

come out with some sort of crew cut, I think there'd be an uproar. We tried a few different colours. I think there was a redder version, because he's quite red in the cartoon, but that didn't quite work.

### You essentially performed this role twice – once during filming and then again for mo-cap. How was that?

It's funny. Occasionally, there were instances where it was possible to discover something additional about a scene in the MOVA booth. It couldn't be anything radically different because the body and facial orientation had to be what we did on the day. As an actor, there is that condition where you get in a bath after a day's filming and think, "Oh God, I wish I'd done that with that line," or whatever. But with this technology, there was the opportunity to act on that and be like, "Oh, yeah, I wonder if I can try that in the booth?" **JC**



SPOTLIGHT

Ele





# mentary

## dear Watson

*Emma Watson's core feminist principles inform everything she does. No wonder she's the perfect choice to play Disney's new generation heroine.*

WORDS JANE CROWTHER PORTRAIT KERRY HALIHAN

**I**t's difficult when people go, 'So you're playing a Disney princess?' No. This is a myth that's been around forever. This goes deep. This speaks on a lot of levels. Please don't be so dismissive. It's boring and judgemental. Go away and do research. Do better." Emma Watson isn't taking any prisoners during her press day for *Beauty And The Beast* ("Not saying that to you!" she assures TF, "I'm saying you're the opposite").

The kid actor who grew up portraying the straight-talking Hermione in the *Potter* franchise has transformed into a clear-eyed and direct adult. A seasoned pro, Watson's always been intelligent, candid and unfailingly polite. But having latterly used her fame to promote women's rights – UN speeches as a goodwill ambassador and spearheading the #heforshe initiative (and seen the anti-feminist bile that comes with that) – the 26-year-old is emboldened, driven and unwilling to compromise on her principles. And if that means only taking roles that promote positive female perspectives or correcting journalists, so be it. And Hollywood better get used to the idea that if they're hiring Watson, they're hiring that directive.

"One hundred per cent," she nods, pulling her rich cream coat closer around her. "I'm still very young,

but I've been doing my job for 15 years now. I want to work with other artists that are collaborative and inclusive. That's really important to me. It's going to become very difficult to do projects where I feel like my values are at odds with what's going on around me."

That's why the role of Belle so appealed. "I didn't know they were going to make *Beauty And The Beast* at the time I turned down *Cinderella*. But when they offered me Belle, I just felt the character resonated with me so much more than *Cinderella* did. She remains curious, compassionate and open-minded. And that's the kind of woman I would want to embody as a role model, given the choice." The character and actor also share a love of books, with Watson launching her feminist book club, Our Shared Shelf, and leaving inspiring reads on the London Underground and NY subway for commuters to discover – "2016 Belle definitely would [*do that*!]" she laughs.

The book club was part of a number of projects Watson took on during a year-long break from acting that started after filming wrapped. "I've been reading books like a crazy person," she says. "I got to do a lot of travelling for UN Women, which was amazing. And also, I just got to be part of the normal world for a while, which is important for sanity purposes. It rebalanced and recalibrated me a little bit. Not just as an actress, but as a human being."

She takes her downtime as seriously as her work, figuring that her acting is informed by real-world experiences, not by being stuck in a 'weird bubble'. "When you're making a film, it's really relentless and you're very detached. I don't get enough interaction with the normal world." That interaction includes running real-life errands, observing people and moving around unnoticed. "I think [*not being recognised*] is a really important barometer. If it ever gets to a point where I can't do that, I go, 'OK...'" She frowns. "It's genuinely important for me to be able to go to the supermarket sometimes!"

Her next project, *The Circle* with Tom Hanks, taps into zeitgeist worries of tech super-companies' political influence and issues of privacy. "Let's imagine if Facebook or Google, with all the information they have access to, started getting involved in the political and democratic process – and the kind of carnage that that could cause. These corporations have influence that goes far beyond what we ever imagined, and we hand over information about ourselves without a second's thought. I thought the film talks about something important and will provoke a really interesting conversation."

Provoking conversation is Watson's MO – just don't provoke her with a question about Disney princesses...

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST OPENS 17 MARCH.







# Gods & Monsters

From Georges Méliès to *A Monster Calls*, Boris Karloff to *Beauty And The Beast*, cinema's love of monsters – and audiences' ongoing fascination with them – has upheld one clear idea: in many hairy, scary and full-blooded ways, the monsters are us...

WORDS KEVIN HARLEY

**I** love monsters the way people worship holy images," Guillermo del Toro told *The Guardian* recently. He'll be at home in 2017, in that case, because even a swift sweep of the release schedules suggests that del Toro worships at a broad church. Right off the

bat, *A Monster Calls* merges deep feels with deep-voiced monstrosity. *Kong: Skull Island* revives a big-hearted beast; later, Universal's latest crack at reviving classic monsters (and Tom Cruise) arrives with *The Mummy*. And monster love will be a tale as old as time in Disney's live-action *Beauty And The Beast*.

Elsewhere, *The Great Wall*, *Alien: Covenant* and *God Particle* should prove monsters come in many forms: they can be insectoid, abstract, parasitic, mythological, giant, bandaged, furry or even just humans behaving monstrously. They can be metaphors: for mad science or McCarthyism, desire or dread. And they can be funny, from *Monsters, Inc.*'s scream team to *Night Of The Lepus*' bunnies.

Yet the monsters that seduce and scare us most are oddly familiar. Ask David Cronenberg, whose *The Fly* is a monster benchmark. "I think the further away from the human form a monster becomes, the more it becomes like a natural disaster.

If you're eaten by a shark, it's almost like being hit by lightning... When a monster is recognisably human, like a Cyclops, that's when the definition of monster and monstrous and monstrosity becomes very specific and very resonant."

In other words? We love monsters because, on many complex, historically shifting levels, they're us.

## MONSTER HOUSE

A look back to the pre-cinema upbringings of monsters proves the point, argues Andreas Charalambous, editor of *wehearhorror.com*, plus Anglia Ruskin, Film, Media and Journalism lecturer at University Centre Harlow, whose PhD is on movie monsters.

"There has always been a primitive fascination with monsters among humankind, ever since our brains developed far enough to imagine them. Early on, we had imagined and created mythological monstrous beasts that were a hideous mixture of creatures we are familiar with, but the most monstrous of all are those that are most like us. We started developing these mythological monsters and they became culturally significant (human/animal hybrids, giant humans or humans of unnatural size, strength, in Greek mythology; the Devil in



# TF INVESTIGATES

the Bible, which took the form of a man with horns, a tail and hooves; the Mummy in Egyptian mythology; monsters in children's fairytales; vampires, zombies and masked figures in modern horror culture."

In the pre-Victorian era, these fascinations evolved. People would visit 'freak shows', says Charalambous, "not only to be repulsed by these beings and imagine how horrible it must be to be them (and be thankful that we are NOT them)". We would, also, be "attracted to and desire them".

Cinema caught on fast, pursuing ways to give form to fears and anxieties in a developing medium. As early as 1896, Georges Méliès spliced pioneering effects and myth for his menagerie of cavorting beasts in *Le Manoir Du Diable* (*The House Of The Devil*). "Much like modern horror cinema, Méliès allowed us to witness 'true' living breathing monsters and monstrous beings through special effects, in front of our very eyes, rather than just imagine/tell/read stories about them," says Charalambous.

## MONSTERS VS ALIENS

Film's early visionaries continued searching for ways to realise the seething subtextual promise of monsters. *Frankenstein* (1910) used tints and mirror tricks; actor John Barrymore,

film company Famous Players-Lasky's make-up team and a romantic plot strand brought heartache and horror to 1920's *Dr. Jekyll And Mr. Hyde*; and writer-director-star Paul Wegener instilled themes of romance and rejection in 1915's *The Golem*. In 1933, *King Kong* deployed romantic themes plus Willis O'Brien's radical design work to pump up the ape's personality, whether he's playing with a T-rex's jaw or falling for Fay Wray.

Universal started as it meant to continue with its monster cycle. In 1925's *The Phantom Of The Opera*, Lon Chaney emphasised the man behind the mask. "I wanted to remind people that the lowest types of humanity may have within them the capacity for supreme self-sacrifice," he wrote. "The dwarfed, misshapen beggar of the streets may have the noblest ideals."

In Universal's banner year of 1931 (see also *Dracula*), director James Whale fused gothic grandeur with outsider empathy and cinematic invention to forge an icon of wounded rage from *Frankenstein's* forced-into-life creature. Make-up magician Jack Pierce and star Boris Karloff made him pitiable – and, also, helped prepare routes for the tragic yearnings of *The Wolf Man* and *Creature From The Black Lagoon* to follow.

Into the '40s, the monsters of Jacques Tourneur's RKO Studios' films

oozed subtext and stylised suggestion: *I Walked With A Zombie* and *Cat People* might not scare, but they brim with mood and meaning. As for '50s monsters, *Gremlins* director Joe Dante's simple definition resonates: "Monsters are metaphors." The decade fizzed with beastly parallels for McCarthy-ism, atomic dread and teenage rebellion. Some of the leads in '50s movies seem pod-person stiff because they were pod-people in alien-takeover films such as *Invasion Of The Body Snatchers*. Later in the decade, a rising youth market proved influential, inspiring the likes of *I Was A Teenage Werewolf*.

## CURSED CREATURES

Universal's lessons were not forgotten by Hammer films, in which Christopher Lee emphasised his monsters' humanity. "The creature is a very pitiful character," he said of his role in *The Curse Of Frankenstein*. "He didn't ask to be made; he's a victim." But loosening screen boundaries became evident in 1958's saucier-than-usual *Dracula*, in which Lee's Count dripped with sexual charisma.

In the '60s, the decline of the censorious Hays Code and the rise of revolutionary thinking heightened movies' licence to thrill and resonate. George A. Romero's *Night Of The Living Dead* sets itself up as a break from

### BELOW

(from left) Christopher Lee in Hammer's *Dracula* (1958), David Cronenberg's *The Fly* (1986), John Landis' *An American Werewolf In London* (1981); and Guillermo del Toro's *Pan's Labyrinth* (2006).





creaky vintage monsters in the opening sequences, before plunging into a siege-based microcosm of a fractured America.

Into the '70s, Cronenberg upheld Romero's taboo-trashing, cracked-mirror, no-budget influence with *Shivers*, which empathised with its licentious monsters – if monsters they even be. Towards the decade's (spiked) tail-end, the xenomorph in Ridley Scott's *Alien* stretches human identification but fascinates partly because it sets the ground on which Ripley and the alien would be linked in later series entries.

In the '80s, increasingly savvy audiences embraced knowing monsters. Consider Chucky and Freddy Krueger, or the arch intelligence of Hannibal Lecter, first seen on screen in 1986's *Manhunter*: a human being, yes, but a socially uninhibited monster of sorts. The best special effects, meanwhile, maintained elements of anchoring, ambiguous humanity. For his spectacularly realised *The Thing*, John Carpenter drew tension from is he/isn't he an alien issues. Cronenberg's *The Fly* was a weeping sore of a transformation movie, which fused human and monstrous in an emotional meditation on ageing channelled through a red-raw twist on *Beauty And The Beast*. "It's an examination of what is universal about

**ABOVE**  
The likes of Romero's *Night Of The Living Dead* revolutionised monster movies in the '60s.



human existence," said Cronenberg. Clive Barker's monsters were equally fully felt creations. His design instructions for *Hellraiser*'s S&M Cenobites mixed awe and horror – he wrote of a "repulsive glamour". For his next film, *Nightbreed* – described as "the first truly gay horror fantasy epic" by experimental arthouse godhead Alejandro Jodorowsky – Barker battled a studio that didn't understand his use of monsters as an allegory for his experiences as a gay man. "Someone at Morgan Creek [Productions] said to me, 'You know, Clive, if you're not careful, some people are going to like the monsters.' Talk about completely missing the point!"

monster blurs of *Pan's Labyrinth*; the faun chilled, Captain Vidal terrified. And as effects evolved, the best CG monster work maintained recognisable human traits, as with Andy Serkis' wretched Gollum and macho King Kong.

Our human capacity for self-reflection serves to further dissolve divisions, says Charalambous, who spotlights a TV example. "As we see every week on *The Walking Dead*, the monsters aren't really the zombies, but the humans trying to destroy each other (the Governor, Negan and the Saviours, Rick Grimes in his darker moments). The zombies (if you excuse the fact that they want to tear at your intestines!) are quite sympathetic in all of this."

## 'The creature is a pitiful character. He didn't ask to be made, he's a victim'

Christopher Lee



In the '80s and beyond, vintage monsters continued to receive love from many sources. The wolf man thrived in John Landis' *An American Werewolf In London*, a film more romantic and wry than scary. Lycanthropy later received a potent female variant in *Ginger Snaps*, while David Thewlis said he thought of J.K. Rowling's Remus Lupin as a "gay junkie" in *Harry Potter And The Prisoner Of Azkaban* (it wasn't until later that Thewlis discovered Lupin's marriage to Nymphadora Tonks). And if you view vampires as monsters, the tonal range from *Twilight* to *Let The Right One In* tells us how much flexibility there is in a core set of themes: never ageing, always hungering...

### FANTASTIC BEASTS

Into the 2000s, del Toro's monster love flourished with Ron Perlman's longings for Selma Blair in *Hellboy* and the man/

At another extreme, the rise of long-form TV potentially deepens our engagement with human monsters such as Norman Bates (*Bates Motel*) and Hannibal Lecter, he argues, allowing us to understand them better over a sustained length. And cinema will, surely, rally its resources to compete.

"We are starting to see the 'serialisation' of longer, continuous film narratives that span a number of feature films (not just sequels to films that came before)," says Charalambous, "which allows for more character and narrative development. So, with regards to monsters in upcoming films – we can expect them to be more developed, more detailed and more monstrous than those that have come before."

To paraphrase a famous monster movie (of sorts), del Toro might well be needing a bigger church.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST OPENS 17 MARCH.



# School of hard knocks

In a public high school on the verge of meltdown, **ICE CUBE** and **CHARLIE DAY** go mano a mano in Richie Keen's bruising comedy. Total Film joins them on set for a pedagogue playground punch-up like you've never seen.

WORDS JAMES MOTTRAM





**ICE CUBE**

ce Cube is standing at a classroom desk, packing his belongings into a cardboard box. Looking up, he points, then puts his fist to his head. Finally, he holds up three fingers. "I'm gonna kill your ass," he mutters. Truth be told, *Total Film* is worried. The former N.W.A. star is pissed (in the American sense of the word). Fortunately, his anger is being directed not at us but at mild-mannered Charlie Day (*Horrible Bosses*), his co-star in teacher versus teacher comedy *Fist Fight*.

With the clock ticking towards a 3pm smackdown, "Our film is some weird combination between *High Noon* and a John Hughes movie," says director Richie Keen between takes. Set on the last day of term, with these high-school kids already running riot, things come to a head when Cube's volcanic-tempered history teacher Ron Strickland goes ape at a pupil – smashing his desk in half – for repeatedly switching off his ageing VCR with a mobile phone app.

A witness to the incident, Day's English teacher Andy Campbell is pulled in front of the principal (*Breaking Bad*'s Dean Norris) to reveal all. "My job is also on the line, so I rat him out," says a shirt-and-tie-wearing Day, "and he challenges me to a fight at the end of the school day." A neat spin on the classic '80s comedy *Three O'Clock High* – when a bully threatens a nerd with an after-school beating – Campbell spends most of the day trying to worm his way out of it, before realising he'll have to man up.

Written by Evan Susser and Van Robichaux (who are currently penning the *Sonic The Hedgehog* movie), Keen was immediately taken when he read the script. "It read like a rated-R adult John Hughes movie," he says. "I grew up in the suburbs of Chicago when they were filming all of those movies. So I used to go watch them shoot *Home Alone*, *Ferris Bueller*, *Sixteen Candles*." He grins. "Every generation needs that great high-school movie."

Still, John Hughes never had Ice Cube to cast. When the actor-producer-rapper steps off set, dressed in Puma trainers and a navy ScubaMax coat and munching on M&Ms, he's in a buoyant mood. "I just think this character will jump off the screen," he announces. "He's outrageous. Very prickly." He





Tracy Morgan makes his big screen return.



**ABOVE**  
Filmed at a real Atlanta school, the extras were mostly local children.



fixes *TF* with a thousand-yard stare. “I think he’s going to be one of the most iconic teachers ever on screen!” Keen agrees. “I can see teachers having signs in their classrooms of Strickland.”

Others aren’t so certain, unsure if the education system is quite ready for such a straight-shooter. “I don’t know that there are tons of role models for teachers or students in this,” chuckles Christina Hendricks, sauntering on set in jeans and a striped shirt with her hair a flame-coloured bob. The *Mad Men* star has just shot a major scene with Cube, playing Miss Monet, the school’s knife-wielding French teacher. “She comes across as quite demure but turns very quickly,” says the actress. “She definitely has a dark side.”

**W**

ith just a couple of days left of a 40-day shoot, there’s an almost eerie feeling around these parts. Shot in Roosevelt High School, a now-empty public school on the outskirts of Atlanta, the chilly corridors, rows of lockers and refectory left Hendricks with the “heebee-jeebies”, she admits. “Now I’ve been here a month, I’ve calmed down, but when I first walked in I was like, ‘Urgh – someone’s going to make fun of me! Someone’s going to say something mean, I just know it!’”

Day, also on board as an executive producer, concurs. “School was not the happiest time of my life so it brings back chilling memories. I had all those feelings when we first started filming, but now I’m numb to it.” Still, here it’s not the pupils that get hazed but the teachers that find themselves under attack, as a quick glance in Campbell’s classroom confirms. On a whiteboard, with a lesson about Shakespearean poetry neatly printed on it, is the phrase: “Mr. Dick Suck’s English Class.”

“Really, it’s not set in a quality school,” says Day. “It’s set in a school

that’s struggling and the teachers are at ground zero, stuck between oppressive administration and students that are just out of control. And Ice Cube’s character, Mr. Strickland, has a very militant philosophy for how to deal with these kids. My teacher tries to kill them with kindness, and those two budding philosophies have to meet somewhere in the middle over the course of the movie.”

In Cube’s eyes, *Fist Fight* reflects the trials teachers have to face now. Back

when he was in school, “The parents and the teachers were on the same side,” he says. “But somehow the students and the parents start ganging up on the teachers and that’s the turnaround that made teachers step back. And it made students bolder in what they did. If a teacher called my house back in the day, I was in trouble. Now, the teacher calls the house, the mama cuss him out for calling the house: ‘Not my baby!’ It’s a whole different flavour!”

For Keen, a TV veteran (including Day’s sitcom *It’s Always Sunny In Philadelphia*) making his feature debut, his message to his casting director Rich Delia, costumer Denise Wingate and production designer Chris Cornwell was quite simple: keep it real. The extras playing the kids? “Almost all are local,” he says. “I got sent a lot of kids from TV shows and I didn’t want them. I wanted the kids to look real. I wanted

“HE’S OUTRAGEOUS. VERY PRICKLY. HE’S GOING TO BE ONE OF THE MOST ICONIC TEACHERS EVER ON SCREEN” **ICE CUBE**





paired up with Day. Originally he tried to recruit him for last year's *Ride Along 2*, with Kevin Hart. "We were looking for our third wheel... I was asking if Charlie Day was available and he wasn't. I was like 'Damn!' I knew if we worked together, we could have a cool chemistry and we'd be able to play off each other and make people laugh."

But will they? Hendricks is bullish enough to predict *Fist Fight* to be a future classic, much in the way the John Hughes movies became. "There are lines and moments which I'm sure will be quoted for years to come," she says. "It may be one of those ones which you'll watch over and over. My husband [Geoffrey Arend] was in one of those – *Super Troopers* – and guys watch it over and over and over! People are like, 'That's my favourite film ever!' I think this has that same kind of feeling. Really bold funny moments."

Talking of which, Cube has just stepped back on set for another scene. This time, he's got a red fireman's axe in his hand – as he stalks around the classroom aiming his blade for Day's head. Frightening, right? "Well, I'm scared of a light breeze!" laughs Day. "So not much acting required." Keen nods in agreement, admitting he was nervous when he first met his star. "Have you heard the song 'No Vaseline' [a classic diss track, taken from Cube's second solo album *Death Certificate*]?" It's intimidating!"

Spinning his cap around his finger, Keen cracks a smile. "The real secret about Ice Cube... he's just a sweet, kind guy. I know he wouldn't want me saying that because it's off-brand from what he normally does." Ice Cube sweet? If he's not careful, his star will be taking him outside for a knuckle sandwich...

FIST FIGHT OPENS ON 3 MARCH.

their wardrobe to be real. I didn't want it to look like a Gap ad."

Warming to the idea, he continues: "I want this to feel real but the people within the school can be a little crazy. Sort of like in *Curb Your Enthusiasm* – you go with Larry David. You actually believe this is a real person doing this. Once you get inside the school, you meet these crazy people but you believe that's who works in this run-down public school." With its imposing courtyard, it could just as easily be a maximum-security jail, he adds. "I always said 'it's the prison guards versus the inmates' on this movie."

While most films would shirk from showing two teachers battling it out in the playground, *Fist Fight* delivers what it promises. Already, the massive finale has been shot. "Eight days of stunts," groans Cube. "I worked on xXx [State Of The Union]... I don't know if we did eight days of stunts in a row of that kind of hardcore fight." Any injuries? "Bruises, nicks, pulls... I had a masseuse out here earning her money. I'm glad those days are behind us."

One of the film's pleasant surprises is Tracy Morgan, who features as the school's PE teacher. The *30 Rock* star is

making his first return to work since he was critically injured in June 2014, when his limo was rear-ended by an 18-wheeler on a New Jersey highway – an accident that took the life of Morgan's comedian friend James 'Jimmy Mack' McNair. "I got to know Tracy a little bit before the accident," says Day, who appears delighted to see his old friend back where he belongs.

"Aside from how much it's affected him emotionally and what it is to go through something like that, it's nice to see how much he's the same man as before the accident. He was very grateful to be here and be working again, almost to the point where he was a little bit nervous on his first day and we made sure that he felt comfortable and let him do what he did. By the time we finished shooting, he was so funny and so relaxed in his character."

With the rest of the cast fleshed out with comic talent – Jillian Bell (Cube's *22 Jump Street* co-star), Kumail Nanjiani (*Mike And Dave Need Wedding Dates*) – Cube is particularly pleased to be

**ABOVE**  
Strickland (Ice Cube) isn't impressed when his colleague Campbell (Charlie Day) drops him in it with the principal.

**BELOW**  
Strickland loses his cool. With an axe.





CONCEPT ART

# WHERE DOES HE



# WONDERFUL



# GET THOSE

Join us for a guided tour of the Batcave, as director Chris McKay walks *Total Film* through the gadget-packed HQ of the Caped Crusader in **THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE**.

WORDS MATT MAYTUM



"Batman's a lot like James Bond or Sherlock Holmes or *Mission: Impossible* or something like that," says Chris McKay. "It's just as

much about the character as it is about the gadgets and the toys and the little details." *Total Film* is catching up with the director (best known for TV's *Robot Chicken*) as he's putting the finishing touches on *The Lego Batman Movie*, the spin-off for the scene-stealing, Will Arnett-voiced Dark Knight from the block-busting *Lego Movie*.

"Because there's a deep history of Batman, you do a lot of research," says McKay, of crafting the world. "You sort of look at all the different iterations of it, and because Batman's been around for 78 years, people have done encyclopedias and cut-outs of Batcaves and weapons and gadgets and ships and cars and things like that."

Playing with Lego, and the Caped Crusader's rich history – particularly when you can poke fun at Gotham's finest – is as fun as it sounds. "It's also something designers love to get into," adds McKay. "It's like, 'I get to design a new Batmobile or a Batwing or a Bat-dune-buggy or whatever it is?' It's a challenge they want to sink their teeth into."

Here McKay gives us an exclusive look inside the concept art and design process behind Bruce Wayne's bachelor pad and underground lair...

# LETOYES?



# CONCEPT ART

## CAR LARK

"We have a lot of designers who are really good at doing stuff in pencil," says McKay. "But there are other people who are more hands-on who will talk to the people at Lego. Maybe they'll bring a couple of master builders over and then we'll sit down. And they'll just free build - we'll talk about a Batmobile, and they'll go, 'Great, here's some ideas we wanted to play around with,' or, 'Here's something we can do.'"

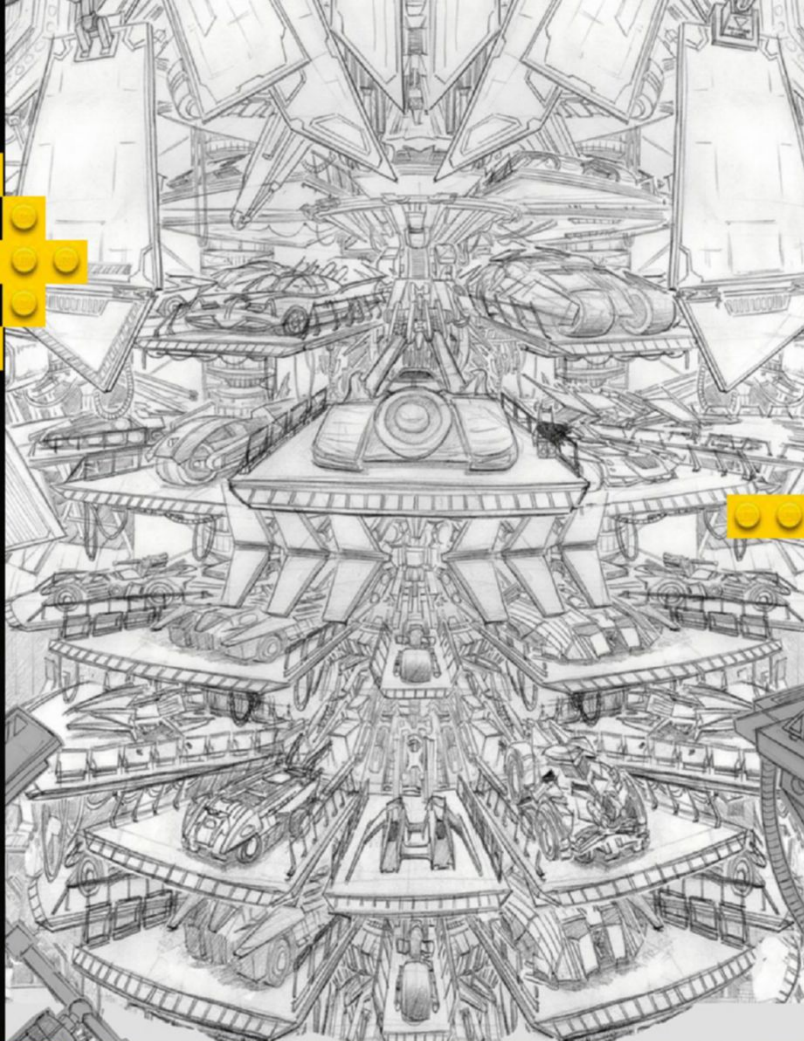
"And then there's stuff that happens when you're working with a storyboard artist who has nothing to do with the design department at all. You're working on a scene maybe in conjunction with the writer, or maybe just you and the board artist, and a new idea comes out of it, or a new gadget, or a new thing that we need to tell the story."

"Everyone's probably got their favourite Batmobile. I love what Christopher Nolan did with the Tumbler. I love the '60s black and orange thing from the Adam West show."

"We looked at all of those things, and they also came up with something that we just thought would be fun. Something that's like a dragster, and yet it had Hummer tyres and could, almost like *Speed Racer's* Mach Five, be able to have the car jump up or have the legs go up on stilts, so that it could move over traffic."

"It just seemed like something that would be fun and gadget-y and cool. It had little nods to a lot of those things. I wanted something to hybrid all of that."

"A lot of stuff just comes from our childhood and the things that we loved as kids that stuck with us. It kind of starts there."



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## CAVE OF WONDERS

"One of the first views of the Batcave was something a board artist had done, who started to rough in this big sketch of the kinds of contraptions that would be in the Batcave, and the mode of getting to the Batcave."

"He was such a brilliant artist, and it was so well thought-out, that we started feeding that stuff into the design department. They started working with some of those designs, and started building off of that. We went into Lego Digital Designer, which is a program Lego has. So we make sure the stuff we're making can actually be built with bricks. If they have access to a million bricks, people could actually build some of this stuff."

"And the other thing is, at the same time that we're designing or doing paintings, we're doing the emotional storytelling. Not only is it about the vehicles and the Batcave, but it's also about, 'This is this big space this little lonely guy works in.'"

"It's about the emotional storytelling of, 'Wow, this guy has all these toys, but no one to play with.' There's two things that you sort of set out to do. One is, how can we outfit this world and make it fun? But what are you getting at with this character that these things also serve? Where is his arc going to take you? And that's the other thing you start to design as well. So when we first set out, those were the kind of things we'd sort of dig into."



# THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE



## COSTUME BALL

"[Screenwriter] Seth Grahame-Smith wrote that joke [about Robin's Reggae Man costume]. It was one of the first jokes we had for the movie. The costume's kind of colourful, and it's just weird, you know? Originally Robin was supposed to be modelled after Robin Hood, which is why he has the boots he has, and stuff like that. So that's where Robin came from. Compared to Batman, having a Robin so colourful, we figured we needed to go at it, so that's where the reggae thing came from."

## WORLD BUILDING

"I love the fact we were able to use the history of Batman as the launching point for this character, suggesting in a way that our character in the movie has been around for 78 years, and that he's been through the history of Batman. So he would have fought Condiment King – that's real, he's from the animated series – but we also have Mutant Leader from the Frank Miller stuff. And we've got characters from all different eras of Batman."

"So I love those things. I love the references where we have things just where there's a truck going by in the background, and it's the Falcone truck – that character's been in other iterations, but is most well-known from the Christopher Nolan movies. Stuff like that where we had to throw on one little reference – just because we're all fans."

THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE OPENS ON  
10 FEBRUARY.



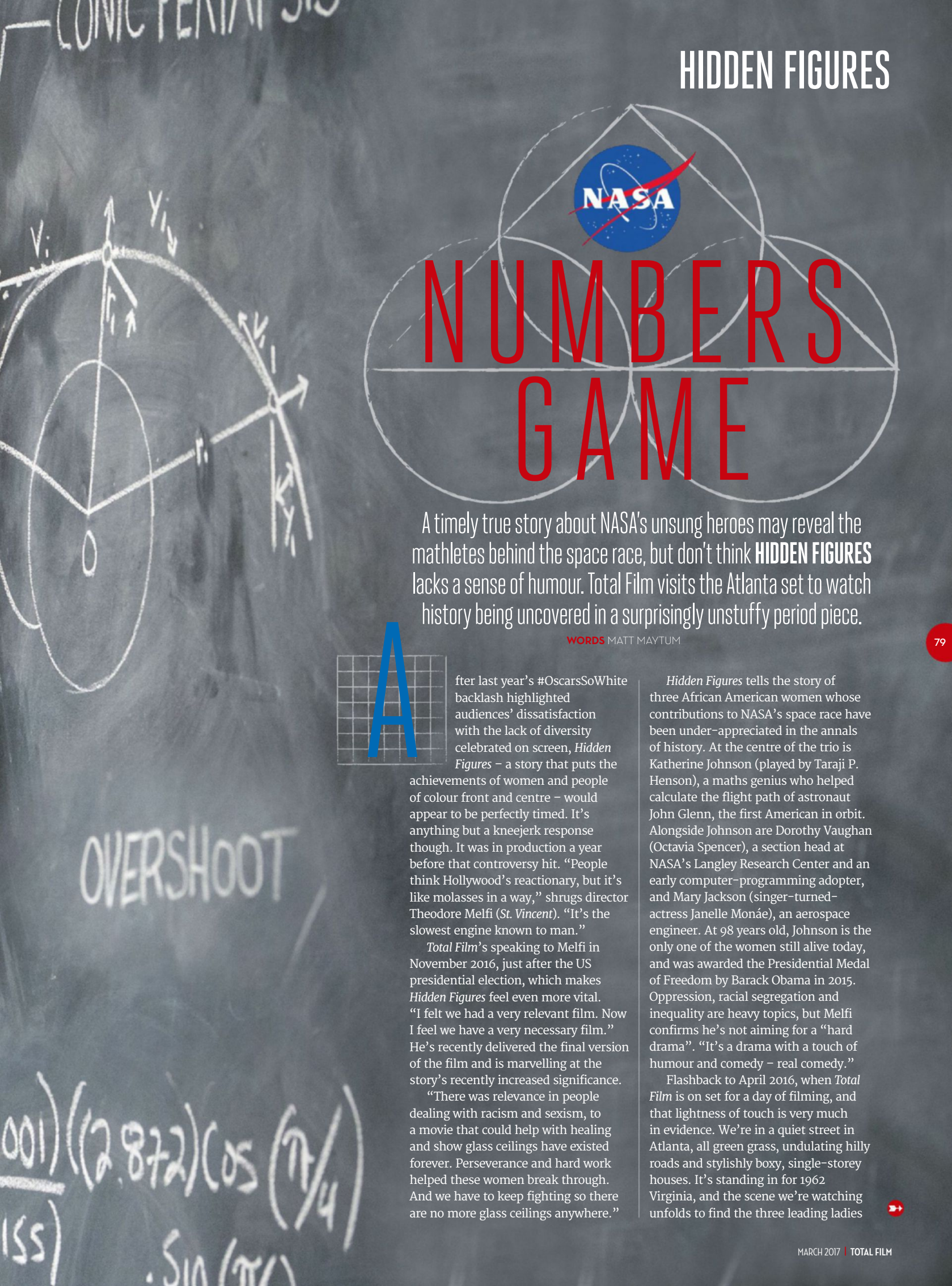


ON SET



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# NUMBERS GAME

A timely true story about NASA's unsung heroes may reveal the mathletes behind the space race, but don't think **HIDDEN FIGURES** lacks a sense of humour. Total Film visits the Atlanta set to watch history being uncovered in a surprisingly unstuffy period piece.

WORDS MATT MAYTUM



After last year's #OscarsSoWhite backlash highlighted audiences' dissatisfaction with the lack of diversity celebrated on screen, *Hidden Figures* – a story that puts the achievements of women and people of colour front and centre – would appear to be perfectly timed. It's anything but a kneejerk response though. It was in production a year before that controversy hit. "People think Hollywood's reactionary, but it's like molasses in a way," shrugs director Theodore Melfi (*St. Vincent*). "It's the slowest engine known to man."

*Total Film's* speaking to Melfi in November 2016, just after the US presidential election, which makes *Hidden Figures* feel even more vital. "I felt we had a very relevant film. Now I feel we have a very necessary film." He's recently delivered the final version of the film and is marvelling at the story's recently increased significance.

"There was relevance in people dealing with racism and sexism, to a movie that could help with healing and show glass ceilings have existed forever. Perseverance and hard work helped these women break through. And we have to keep fighting so there are no more glass ceilings anywhere."

*Hidden Figures* tells the story of three African American women whose contributions to NASA's space race have been under-appreciated in the annals of history. At the centre of the trio is Katherine Johnson (played by Taraji P. Henson), a maths genius who helped calculate the flight path of astronaut John Glenn, the first American in orbit. Alongside Johnson are Dorothy Vaughan (Octavia Spencer), a section head at NASA's Langley Research Center and an early computer-programming adopter, and Mary Jackson (singer-turned-actress Janelle Monáe), an aerospace engineer. At 98 years old, Johnson is the only one of the women still alive today, and was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by Barack Obama in 2015. Oppression, racial segregation and inequality are heavy topics, but Melfi confirms he's not aiming for a "hard drama". "It's a drama with a touch of humour and comedy – real comedy."

Flashback to April 2016, when *Total Film* is on set for a day of filming, and that lightness of touch is very much in evidence. We're in a quiet street in Atlanta, all green grass, undulating hilly roads and stylishly boxy, single-storey houses. It's standing in for 1962 Virginia, and the scene we're watching unfolds to find the three leading ladies





gathered around the table in Dorothy's house. Mary is fuming about her inability to take the course she needs to become an engineer, as it's run at an all-white school. Dorothy's advice? Forget the anger and petition the courts – and stop talking about it! At this point the scene becomes less serious, and Dorothy cracks open a bottle of liquor: "Ladies, not one more peep about work!" The next set-up sees the women, three sheets to the wind, dancing in the kitchen (while trying to whip up a cake mixture and ruminate on life and love at the same time).

Between takes the mood is animated and playful, with silly accents, gentle joshing and frequent cackles between the calls of "Cut!" and "Action!"

"I don't know who keeps spreading rumours that I'm signing on [*Henson's TV show*] *Empire*," joshes Spencer, who leads the banter, jokingly refusing to skip lunch to get more filming done: "I can't do that for my craft," she sighs. "Do you want me to be grumpy?"

*Hidden Figures* might well have a serious message, but conveying that doesn't oblige a 'feel-bad' atmosphere. During a break, Henson – dressed in a black blouse and white floral skirt – steps over to the monitor we're huddled by. "I knew nothing about [*Katherine Johnson*] or any of the wonderful women that worked at NASA," she admits. "I thought it was all run by men. [*laughs*] From all the footage I've seen, I didn't even know women existed in NASA."

Johnson – who graduated high school at 14 – is a more withdrawn figure than the naturally gregarious Henson. "She's quiet... much quieter than me!" laughs Henson when asked about her on-screen persona's personality. "And she's calculating. She's always thinking. I noticed in the script, you can count her lines. So everything for her is always internal, she's always thinking."

Melfi later admits that he wanted to capture Johnson's "quiet resolve... If you've ever seen Taraji in *Empire*, this is like night and day!" As well as working on the calculations that put Glenn into orbit in 1962, as depicted in the film, Johnson would later calculate the trajectory for the Apollo 11 mission to the Moon. This was back when the human mathematicians and physicists calculating the rocket journeys were known as 'computers', just as the electronic IBM machines that would later claim that moniker were coming into use.



The trio also likes to forget their troubles and crack open the booze.



Taraji P. Henson,  
Octavia Spencer and  
Janelle Monáe  
co-star in the  
inspiring story.



## "IT'S ONE OF THOSE STORIES THAT'S GREAT FOR THE WORLD RIGHT NOW" **DIRECTOR THEODORE MELFI**

As well as being a computer, Mary Jackson "became the first female engineer of any race at NASA", explains Monáe, her period costume covered in a thick puffer coat to combat the chilly winds when she speaks to us outside the house between takes. Like most people involved, Monáe wasn't aware of Jackson before signing on for the project. "I had no clue," she says. "So as an African American woman I was upset that history had not mentioned any of these brilliant minds. In school I hadn't heard anything about Ms. Katherine Johnson, Ms. Mary Jackson, Ms. Dorothy Vaughan. I knew nothing about them." In order to get into the spirit of the times, Monáe immersed herself in the movies and music of the '60s (with her short hair up in a silk scarf, she very much looks the part today). "I had to listen to records of the era and just really try to understand what it was like to grow up during a time where black people were treated with inequality and treated 'less than' in a real way, lawfully."

Spencer is a hilarious presence on set, even if what she says contains some powerful sentiments. "When I first read the script, I didn't know what it was going to be about," she explains. "You know, these women who

helped get the first man into space. I thought, 'OK, well, did they make this up?' Because I'd never heard the story before. So it was like reading a bit of a fairytale, because I'd never heard it."

That unfamiliarity with the women's achievements is the key theme that recurs, whoever you talk to on *Hidden Figures*. When we later catch up with Kevin Costner, who plays (fictional) Space Task Group director Al Harrison, he admits to also being unaware of Johnson and co.'s achievements. "I feel like I'm a pretty good audience for this," he drawls. "It's part of our history uncovered." With his character based on an amalgam of three real people, Costner tells us that the character was initially somewhat schizophrenic. "I kind of pointed that out to the director, and the writer actually," he chuckles. "If it needs a bit of writing, I will insist upon it."

Costner credits Melfi for taking time to adjust the character into someone all together more well conceived, working on this supporting role even after production was underway and he had a multitude of other tasks to be concerned with. "He was really true to his word," asserts Costner, who's right at home in the film as the stoic, all-American authority figure. "He never didn't answer the phone. He applied himself to what was going on, and he listened to the contributions I was trying to make, agreed with them and understood."

Also adding a burst of upbeat energy to the film is Pharrell Williams, a self-confessed science/NASA/Katherine Johnson geek (who fittingly grew up in Virginia) who has written several

original songs for the film and worked on the score with Hans Zimmer.

"How could you not be a part of this?" asks Williams of his involvement. "I'm happy to even be a dot in the sentence of what they're doing."

There's a palpable sense that everyone involved feels like a custodian of a story that needs to be told. "It's a story that's great for the world right now," says Melfi. "It brings people together rather than separating them." It's why Melfi took himself out of the running for the *Spider-Man: Homecoming* directing gig. "This is something that comes up once in a lifetime, a story that has to be told and has to be told now... It's not a very hard decision."

Auspicious as *Hidden Figures* may be, the cast are keen to stress that the story should be inspiring beyond boundaries of gender and race. "I think this story is so inspiring," says Monáe. "Not just for women of colour, but women around the world, and any minority or person that feels oppressed right now can look at what Mary and Dorothy and Katherine all became, and be inspired."

"You want [audiences] to feel a little bit different after they've left," says Costner. "Movies are capable of doing that. Sometimes they walk away, they feel entertained but they also feel like they opened up some pages of history they didn't know about."

Melfi has already screened the finished cut to one key VIP: Katherine Johnson. "It was a beautiful thing," he beams. "She's 98 years old. She took her two daughters, who are in their seventies, and they were crying and laughing and loved it so much."

**HIDDEN FIGURES OPENS ON 17 FEBRUARY.**





Boston native Mark Wahlberg stars in **PATRIOTS DAY**, a gut-churning recreation of the Boston Marathon bombing and subsequent manhunt. Total Film learns how a community united, and how Hollywood set out to honour, not exploit, its courage...

WORDS JAMIE GRAHAM

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ark Wahlberg was in New York City on Monday, 15 April, 2013, when two explosions turned the 117th Boston Marathon into the biggest terrorist attack on American soil since 9/11. Given the capital of Massachusetts is his home city, Wahlberg knew all about the marathon's history – held every year since 1897 to celebrate Patriots' Day, which itself commemorates the battles of Concord and Lexington, the first

military engagements of the American Revolutionary War. So he of course felt the fear and the pain that his community was enduring. It was vital that he return home, and immediately.

"I remember driving from the airport into the city and I'd never seen Boston like that," he grimaces, running a hand through his facial scrub. It's now December 2016 and he's stationed in the Four Seasons Hotel in Beverly Hills, Los Angeles, but his gaze has turned inward. "The streets were completely empty. It was a scary time."

Scary, yes, but over the next 105 hours, as the city shut down and a 1,000-strong task force consisting of federal, state and local law enforcement convened to first identify two home-grown suspects, brothers Tamerlan and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, and then pursue them, Wahlberg also saw his city unite. Boston Strong became the slogan, with the courage of the first-responders replicated by a proud population that refused to be cowed.

"It's not just Boston," Wahlberg says. "We've seen with recent tragedies all over the world, people coming together. But for me, personally, I was so proud of the way my community responded."

That Hollywood should make a film from these events was inevitable – what studio could resist such a journey from darkness into light, the path paved by heroism and indomitable human spirit? But Hollywood being Hollywood, there was also a sizeable chance that the filmmakers would get it wrong. Applying a veneer of schmaltz and jingoism would be the least of the problems. Worse would be turning the bombing and ensuing manhunt into a heart-hammering thriller punctuated by action set-pieces designed to elicit whoops.



# RACE FOR



PATRIOTS DAY

# JUSTICE



# MAKING OF

➡ It was an issue that Wahlberg was all too aware of. “They came to me with three movies they were talking of making, and I was like, ‘I don’t know, it’s way too heavy,’” he begins. “Then I realised they were going to make it regardless. I didn’t want just anyone coming in and not being respectful. It could easily have become exploitative. I thought I should make sure I can control it. That’s why the only person to direct it was Pete [Berg]. From our experiences with [filming true-life tragedies] *Lone Survivor* and *Deepwater Horizon*, I knew of his talent, his generosity, the environment he creates for actors and those behind the camera. I knew how much he cares, how committed he is to getting it right.”

Berg frowns. “We met so many people who were directly impacted by this bombing, and many of them had the same question: ‘How much are you going to show?’” he says. “The implication was, ‘Are you going to cross a line?’ We didn’t want to be gratuitous with the violence, superficial with the characterisation and performance, or be a traditional Hollywood thriller. Whatever you call that line – taste, judgement, grace – you know when you cross it. Our whole philosophy was, play it real.”



The cast and director spent time with many of those caught up in the attack and investigation to prepare for the shoot.

## ‘WE DIDN’T WANT TO BE GRATUITOUS WITH THE VIOLENCE OR SUPERFICIAL WITH THE CHARACTERISATION’ PETER BERG

Before a word of the script was written, Berg and his team spent several months interviewing FBI case agents, Massachusetts State Police, community leaders and more. The film, it was clear, needed to be an ensemble piece, with a large number of characters introduced in the early stages. Nearly all of these characters are based on key real-life figures, though Wahlberg’s Sgt. Tommy Saunders is a composite of several cops in order to give the viewer eyes and ears on a succession of key events.

Spending time with Richard DesLauriers, the FBI special agent who spearheaded the manhunt, was a great help to the actor who portrays his calm authority under immense pressure, Kevin Bacon. “I like to build a backstory

for a [fictional] character, so I’ll take everything the writer and director have to offer, and then start filling in the blanks,” he explains. “So to actually have a real person, it’s like my work is done for me. To see the way he thinks and moves, what he orders for lunch. It became immediately clear that he was a man of tremendous integrity, someone who cares deeply about his work.”

J.K. Simmons, who plays Sgt. Jeffrey Pugliese, also benefitted from plenty of face-time. “We hung out in Watertown, went to the police department, to the firing range, to dinner and to ball games,” he says, tossing a fistful of cashew nuts into his mouth. “It was a level of access that was crucial to trying to get it right. And all the scenes in the movie that are in Jeff’s house, we shot in his real house.”

A career cop with 34 years on the force, Pugliese was present at a frantic shootout between police and the Tsarnaev brothers that took place on Laurel Street, a quiet residential area in Watertown. His courageous actions in hellish circumstances saw him awarded a Top Cop Award by President Obama in 2014, and he returned to the location to walk Simmons through the gunfight.

“What you see is the reality,” says the actor. “He took me to Laurel Street. It’s unbelievable he’s alive. It’s like the magician who throws the knives – there’s a halo of bullet holes in the wall behind where Jeff was standing. Everything I say during that sequence in the film is exactly what he said, including the call for the ambulance.”



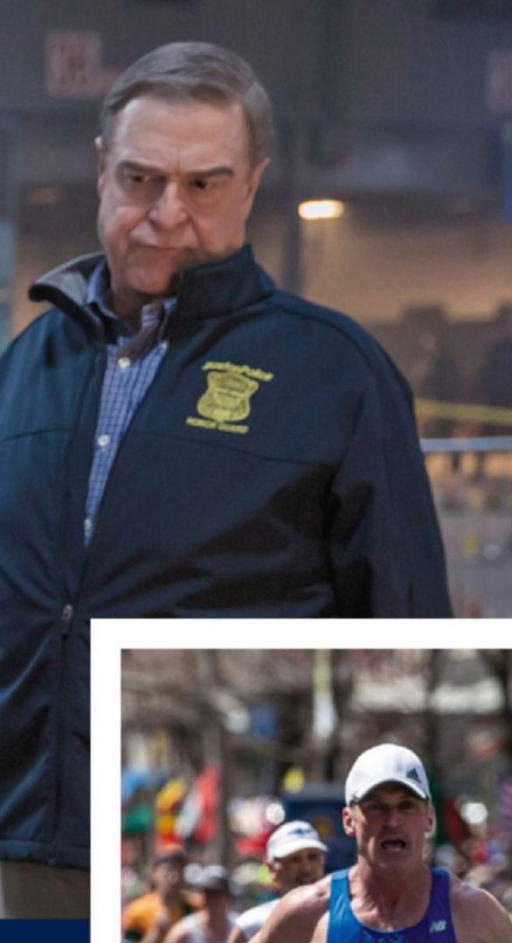
**LEFT**  
Bostonian Wahlberg returned to the city as soon as he heard news of the attack.

**BELOW**  
Wahlberg and Berg were determined the film wouldn’t be exploitative.





# PATRIOTS DAY



Some 4,500 of the film's extras were real Boston locals.

*Patriots Day* is an immersive, unnerving experience from beginning to end, with a tangible authenticity built from using actual locations for 70 per cent of the film, real surveillance footage and videos captured on cell phones, and having the 4,500 extras (150 of them with speaking roles) gleaned from the local area. But it's the gunfight on Laurel Street that shatters any last shred of equilibrium the viewer might be clinging on to.

**B**erg favours shooting in long takes with multiple cameras to let the action play out organically. "There's nothing in that gunfight you haven't see before – handheld cameras, confusion, good sound design," he says. "But this happened on a quiet residential street, not a war zone. It happened with five police who had never fired their guns before, and they're dealing with bombs, which catch them by surprise. They can't catch their breath. They're fighting to not panic. They're fighting to hold their ground. This should not be happening. These cops might not win this fight."

Continuing with the theme of verisimilitude, it was also important to Berg that *Patriots Day* should not paint the Tsarnaev brothers as one-

dimensional bad guys. "I did a lot of research on them," he nods. "I met women who had dated them. I met the boxing coach of the older brother. I met the landlord. I wrote two letters to Dzhokhar in prison; he wrote one back. These were very Americanised young men. One wanted to go to the Olympics as a boxer, the other was a good student. These are guys you'd see at nightclubs and at the movies, not moustache-twirling Muslims." But any empathy only stretches so far. "I don't think they were smart or interesting or righteous. I think they were cowards. Poorly organised and mentally ill is how I'd describe them."

Shot over 45 days in the spring of 2016, *Patriots Day* is not an overtly political film. Berg points out, "If you see someone whose legs have blown off and you run up to him, you're not going to ask him about his sexual orientation or political party, you're gonna help him." While Simmons stresses, "It's about love triumphing over hate." But there's something undeniably timely about seeing a multi-national community come together in the face of great adversity, while one particular hero in this

## ABOVE

J.K. Simmons plays Sgt. Pugliese, who played a critical role in the hunt for the bombers.

## BELOW

Michelle Monaghan offers support as Mark Wahlberg's on-screen wife.

story – perhaps more responsible for the brothers' capture than anyone else – is an immigrant.

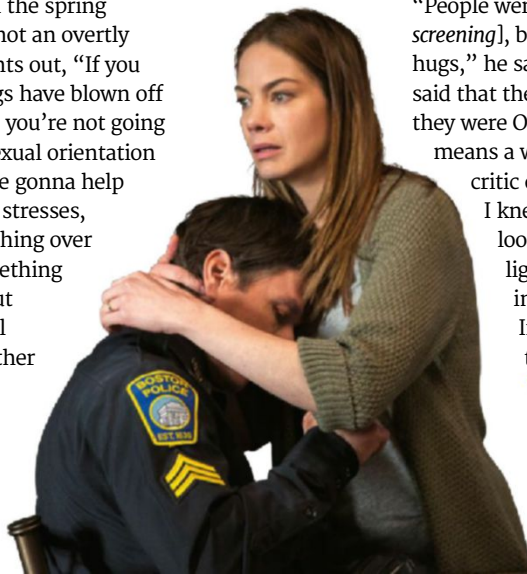
Wahlberg won't be drawn on the film's place within Trump's America, but he agrees it's the message of solidarity that's paramount, saying, "People say, 'Is it too soon?' [*for a film about the Boston Marathon bombing*]. No, it's not, because that message has to be heard by everybody, immediately."

Bacon nods. "Whether these guys had any kind of 'idea' is debatable – they just seem like a couple of dumb kids – but if there is an idea, it's to divide, to create fear. Yet Boston, like New York after 9/11, was all about coming together, looking out for each other. Issues that separate, be it race or socioeconomic, were temporarily at least, and in a beautiful way, gone."

Berg, meanwhile, is just relieved he's done right by the people whose lives are represented on the screen. "People were crying a lot [*during the screening*], but afterwards there were hugs," he says. "To a family, they all said that the film was really good, and they were OK with it. What they think means a whole lot more than any critic or award or box office."

I knew I was going to have to look them in the eye when the lights came up, and I'd know immediately how they felt. If you don't get it right in their eyes, you're fucked."

**PATRIOTS DAY OPENS  
ON 23 FEBRUARY.**





SPOTLIGHT





# CRACK SHOT

**NAOMIE HARRIS** trades in her Moneypenny gun for a raw role as a crack-addicted mother in groundbreaking drama *Moonlight*, which looks set to put her on target for awards glory. Total Film meets the English actress to talk busted stereotypes, the future of James Bond and YouTube binges... **WORDS** MATT MAYTUM **PORTRAIT** MARK ABRAHAMS

Naomie Harris' performance in *Moonlight* is the most celebrated in her career to date, so it's a surprise to learn she was initially apprehensive about taking on a role that's since seen her inundated with awards buzz (at the time of press, she'd won a National Board of Review prize, and been nominated for a Screen Actors Guild award and a Golden Globe, before the season kicks off in earnest).

"As an actor, I think you're rather disempowered, in the sense that you're responding to material that's already been produced," she muses, when *Total Film* meets her in the May Fair Hotel as *Moonlight* plays at the London Film Festival in October 2016. "But I think the only area of power that you do have is in your choices." Harris admits that her choices have hinged on representing women, and black women in particular, in a positive light. Paula, her *Moonlight* character, is a crack addict, and a neglectful mother. Hence the hesitation.

What helped convince her was when director Barry Jenkins explained that Paula was based on his own mother. "I thought, 'No one's ever asked me to play their mother before. Also, he has a vested interest in ensuring the way his mother is portrayed is not stereotypical, he's going to show the true complexity of what it means to have an addiction.'"

Given that she's currently best known to mainstream audiences as James Bond's Moneypenny, having appeared in the two most recent (and biggest) outings, it doesn't require any hyperbole to describe her as unrecognisable in *Moonlight*. Sitting opposite *Total Film* today, she looks as glamorous as you'd expect, dressed in a pleated, baby-pink, sleeveless dress, her hair a tumble of caramel curls. She could have just stepped off a red carpet. So if you're finding it hard to imagine her playing a crack-ravaged addict, don't worry. So was Jenkins.

Producer Jeremy Kleiner (*12 Years A Slave*, *Selma*) sent the script to Harris,





telling her that Jenkins was a big fan of her work and thought she was right for the part. “So I thought, ‘How nice of Barry to think of me,’” smiles Harris. “Then it turns out that Barry hadn’t even seen my work, but it was just Jeremy being a great producer.” The rest, as they say, is history.

*Moonlight* has an audacious three-act structure, tracing the arc from childhood to early adulthood of its central character, Chiron (played in turn by Alex R. Hibbert, Ashton Sanders and Trevante Rhodes). Harris is the one constant between all three parts, playing Chiron’s mother. Unbelievably, Harris shot all of her scenes in just three days. Visa issues meant shooting was rearranged around her availability. “We weren’t shooting in sequence because we didn’t have the luxury of that,” she says. “We were playing Older Paula, Younger Paula, Middle Paula. And so, that was gruelling. But it’s worth it. It was also incredibly liberating and fun, because I’ve never played a character like this before.”

Part of the reason that anyone – Harris and Jenkins included – struggled to picture her in the role is that she’s the polar opposite of Paula. “It was something that really scared me

because I thought, ‘Will I be able to reach a character like this? Because here I am: I don’t drink; I don’t smoke; I don’t even drink coffee. I’m Miss Clean Living, and I’m going to go to crack addiction. How am I going to reach that?’ When you do, you find that you grow as a performer, and that you grow as a human being as well. It’s a real gift.” Her one request today – a glass of water with lemon – confirms her clean living credentials. It obviously required a hell of a lot of research, and there’s one tool – available to all – that she had up her sleeve.

“I had a month before I started shooting where I was doing the press tour for *SPECTRE* at the time,” she explains. “So I was travelling all around the world. My greatest resource – and I think it’s an amazing mine of information – is YouTube. I did all of my research on YouTube.” There’s an untapped wealth of information on there if you’re looking for characters to absorb. “There are incredible documentaries about crack addiction. There are interviews with crack addicts. I also had the opportunity to sit down with a woman who has an addiction, which was enormously helpful to me. So I just mined all of that information.”

All that research is necessary to convincingly fill in the blanks in an unusually structured film like *Moonlight*, in which she plays Paula from young to middle-aged, with huge gaps that need filling off-screen. Cramming all of that character work into just three days doesn’t sound easy, but Harris remains upbeat about it. “It’s nice because usually what happens on a film set is you have so much downtime and so much waiting in your trailer. What was really nice about this was I didn’t have any downtime whatsoever. It was just like: onto the next, onto the next, onto the next...”

Approaching work in such a relentless fashion could sum up Harris’ career. Born in London in 1976, she’s been on TV since the age of nine. Harris stuck with her education, gaining a Social and Political Sciences degree a few years before her breakout role in Danny Boyle’s *28 Days Later*. The work’s never really stopped since – she’s appeared in films as varied as *Pirates Of The Caribbean*, *Miami Vice*, *A Cock And Bull Story* and *Sex & Drugs & Rock & Roll*, before *Skyfall* made her a franchise fixture – plus she’s kept one foot on stage (reuniting with Boyle for 2011’s *Frankenstein* at the National Theatre).

If she’s barely recognisable in *Moonlight*, she’ll be almost invisible in her next role as Nisha in *Jungle Book*, the other big adaptation of Rudyard Kipling’s famous stories, directed by her *Sex & Drugs* co-star Andy Serkis, with the animals created via the medium of performance capture (the 2016 Disney remake used animation rather than mo-cap).

“It was brilliant,” Harris beams of the performance-capture experience. “There’s no hair; there’s no make-up; there’s no lighting; there are no costumes. All you have is a headpiece with a light, dots on your face, and you’re down on your hands and knees, howling – because I was playing a wolf. It was just such a liberating experience. It was like being back at drama school, or playing as kids.” Plus, actor-turned-director Serkis turned out to be extremely supportive as a director. “I remember, I was doing a scene with the man cub. It’s an emotional scene. He came up to me and he had tears in his eyes – he’s just so in there with you.”

Before that film opens though, it’s anyone’s guess as to what’s on the cards next for Harris. She only has her

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**IN FOR A PENNY**  
Harris in *Skyfall*, the first of her two outings to date as Miss Moneypenny.





eye on one thing. "At this point, since we've been working for quite some time, a little break would be nice," she laughs. "No, it's been a great run, but I don't know what I want to do next. I just respond to the material, so if something great lands on my lap, then I'm happy to run with it."

There is, of course, the tuxedo-wearing, martini-drinking elephant in the room, and we can't let Harris go without an update on the next Bond movie – specifically, whether we'll see Daniel Craig back in action. "I don't know," she says, sincerely. "Everyone keeps asking and I'm like, 'Guys, I don't know.' No one believes me, but genuinely, I really don't know. I really hope he comes back. I really hope he does. But who knows at this point? I think the only person who knows, to be honest, is Daniel."

Given how the 007 movies have worked in the past though, Harris' Money Penny could return; Lois Maxwell was, after all, Money Penny for Connery, Lazenby and Moore. Might we see her performing admin for another actor as 007? "I genuinely, genuinely do not know," she grins. "I love Barbara [Broccoli] and Stephanie [Wenborn] and the [Eon] team and obviously Michael Wilson. I met them recently and I said, 'What's

**ABOVE**  
Harris is now the subject of intense awards buzz, for her performance as crack addict-mum Paula in *Moonlight*.

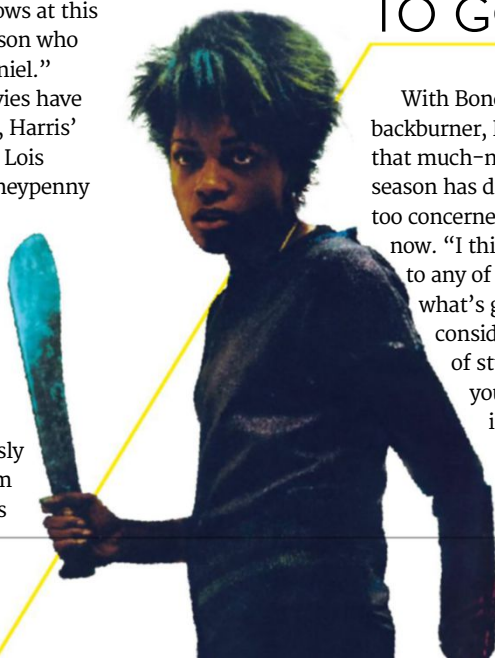
**BELOW**  
The Londoner's breakout role, as Selena, in 2002's *28 Days Later*.

going on guys? Because everybody keeps asking me.' I was believing the hype. I was like, 'Is it Tom Hiddleston? What's going on?' They were like, 'Naomie, nothing is happening.' Because they're doing another film at the moment. They were like, 'We are focusing on this film. We have nothing to do with that.' So everything that's being said, it's all just the media running with it. There's no truth in it."

it is one of those extremely rare movies that has the power to be transformative for an audience."

And after 2016's #OscarsSoWhite controversy, Harris, for one, is confident the backlash has effected a positive change, with the industry recognising audiences' tastes for more diverse stories. "It feels like there's been a massive change. I think this year, with all the films that are coming

## 'I DON'T DRINK; I DON'T SMOKE; I DON'T DRINK COFFEE. I'M MISS CLEAN LIVING, AND I'M GOING TO GO TO CRACK ADDICTION'



With Bond very much on the backburner, Harris might actually get that much-needed break, once awards season has died down. Not that she's too concerned about trophies right now. "I think that you can't listen to any of it because nobody knows what's going to happen," she considers. "I think that kind of stuff, it's not good for you, really. What's most important is as many people as possible see [Moonlight] and are affected by it. I think

out – there's *Hidden Figures*, *Fences*, *Loving*, *A United Kingdom* came out [last year]. I think there's been a massive shift, and it's really, really exciting. I think it's very important to highlight the need for more diversity." She pauses, smiling. "And I also think we should, at this point as well, celebrate the fact there's been this massive change, and long may it continue. This is a great time in terms of film. This is a really special year."

MOONLIGHT OPENS ON 17 FEBRUARY.  
JUNGLE BOOK OPENS IN AUTUMN 2018.



# CINEMA'S MOST



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With Trainspotting's Begbie, Goodfellas' Tommy DeVito and Blue Velvet's Frank Booth recently returning to the big screen for sequels and re-releases, join us for a celebration of the maddest, most unhinged and downright terrifying maniacs ever committed to celluloid...

**WORDS** KEVIN HARLEY, MATT MAYTUM,  
JAMES MOTTRAM, NEIL SMITH, JOSH WINNING

# UNPREDICTABLE NUTJO



# BEGBIE

## TRAINSPOTTING (1996)

Robert Carlyle based Irvine Welsh's psycho on "three or four" people he knew ("All in jail") and viewed him as a closeted gay man. A smart-casual, city-centre wacko who'll grab a knife or pool cue if he thinks you're looking at him funny, Carlyle's ticking time bomb of random-fire, repression-fuelled rage terrifies because he's so plausible. "Ye ken me"? Alas, we do.

**MADDEST MOMENT** Even getting the beers in means trouble when Begbie's around. When a chap apologises for jostling him at the bar, Begbie isn't appeased. "No sorry enough for being a fat cunt," he reasons. Then rams his glass into the geezer's kisser.

## NORMAN STANSFIELD

LÉON (1994)

Jean Reno's title character may be the paid assassin, but it's Gary Oldman's gloriously OTT DEA agent that takes the madman trophy. Sharply suited, this pill-popping, classical music-loving detective is not exactly the sort who abides by the letter of the law.

**MADDEST MOMENT** "I like these calm little moments before the storm," he says, cracking a pill in his gob before going on a shotgun-killing spree. "It reminds me of Beethoven."

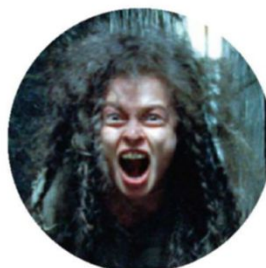


## MR. BLONDE

RESERVOIR DOGS (1992)

The loosest cannon in a combustible bunch, this sharp-suited savage cost Michael Madsen some *Free Willy* fans: "The parents are like, 'Don't go near that guy!'"

**MADDEST MOMENT** Stuck In The Middle With You'. A straight razor. So tense you don't notice everything graphic happens off-screen.



## BELLATRIX LESTRANGE

HARRY POTTER V-VIII (2007-11)

"She's innately a child," said Helena Bonham Carter of her dark witch's zero-conscience mood swings. And she doesn't brush her teeth properly.

**MADDEST MOMENT** Bellatrix's "girl to girl" conversation with Hermione leaves nasty scars. Such a scream...



## DON LOGAN

SEXY BEAST (2000)

Ben Kingsley brings Iago-esque reserves of whip-taut rage and steaming jealousy to his tight-coiled psychogangster: a small man with a volcano inside.

**MADDEST MOMENT** "Gerrup, you cunt." Logan winds himself up to give Ray Winstone's Gal a typically swearsy alarm call.



## AMY DUNNE

GONE GIRL (2014)

*Se7en*'s John Doe has his scrapbook, while Amy Dunne has her diary. *Fight Club*'s narrator destroys something beautiful, while Amy kills myths of happy coupledom. Wielding a pregnancy test like a knife and operating with psycho-surgical improvisational poise, Amy is David Fincher's slickest self-creating sociopath.

**MADDEST MOMENT** Rosamund Pike practised with a box-cutter on a pig carcass to perfect Amy's sharpest cut. Job done: she times and targets a just-climaxing Desi's throat to lethal perfection. Cold.

# BS





## MARGARET WHITE

*CARRIE (1976)*

Piper Laurie left semi-retirement and went for “preposterous” (her words) broke to play Carrie’s mum: a shock-haired Bible-wielder oozing puritanical toxicity.

**MADDEST MOMENT** “We’ll pray...” A tender post-prom moment dies as Margaret stabs Carrie in the back.



## BILL ‘THE BUTCHER’ CUTTING

*GANGS OF NEW YORK (2002)*

Daniel Day-Lewis relishes every murderous note of Scorsese’s dandy psycho, a waywardly accented colossus with beastly tendencies.

**MADDEST MOMENT** “Rib or chop? Loin or shank?” The Butcher taunts, tenderises and terrorises Leo DiCaprio.



## ‘MA’ KATE BARKER

*BLOODY MAMA (1970)*

Loosely based on the real life of matriarchal monster ‘Ma’ Barker, Shelley Winters excels as the bank-robbing, sexually gluttonous mum-of-four.

**MADDEST MOMENT** The final shoot-out, as she shrieks, cries and sprays Tommy gun bullets at the cops.



## MAX CADY

*CAPE FEAR (1991)*

Robert De Niro’s turn as lawyer Nick Nolte’s tormenter makes Travis Bickle look like Bambi. A tattoo-sprawled, philosophy-spouting, cigar-chewing, aggressively ripped rapist, he’s an Old Testament embodiment of vengeance turned animalistic. And he makes a right racket at the cinema.

**MADDEST MOMENT** Described by director Martin Scorsese as the grim truth of “aggravated sexual battery”, the bit where Cady chews a chunk from Illeana Douglas’s legal clerk’s cheek might be beyond words.

## PETER LOEW

*VAMPIRE’S KISS (1988)*

In a career forged in the nuthouse, Nicolas Cage has never been madder than this cult comic-horror – playing a literary agent who loses it when he starts to believe he’s been bitten by a vampire after a one-night stand.

**MADDEST MOMENT** Take your pick! From eating a live cockroach to trashing rooms to running through the streets shouting “I’m a vampire!” with fake plastic teeth, he’s one trip to Tesco’s short of a picnic.



## PATRICK BATEMAN

*AMERICAN PSYCHO (2000)*

Egotistical, manicured, image-obsessed... and those are Patrick Bateman’s good qualities. An investment banker with a tenuous grip on reality, Bateman suffers from hysterical, murderous hallucinations that may or may not be happening for real. A sure sign of his mania? He loves Phil Collins.

**MADDEST MOMENT** “Not the face!” Bateman gets angry when – naked, blood-smeared and chasing Christie (Cara Seymour) with a chainsaw – she has the audacity to fight back by kicking his psychotic schnoz.





# JACK TORRANCE

## THE SHINING (1980)

Kubrick ditched much of Stephen King's backstory for this teacher-turned-caretaker – instead we have the simple story of a family guy teetering on the edge, his sanity crumbling as the ghosts of the Overlook Hotel consume him. **MADDEST MOMENT** Axe. Door. Maniacal grin. In one of cinema's defining fright scenes, Jack hacks away at a bathroom door to get at wife Wendy (Shelley Duvall). An icon is born.



### ASAMI YAMAZAKI

AUDITION (1999)

Eihi Shiina's ex-ballerina seems fragile, until she's duped romantically by ageing widower Aoyama and her secrets (and tools) emerge.

**MADDEST MOMENT** "Kiri kiri..." Audience pressure points located as Asami inflicts lingering acupunctural revenge on Aoyama.



### TOMMY UDO

KISS OF DEATH (1947)

In his debut role, Richard Widmark gained an Oscar nom for this psychopathic killer out for revenge against Victor Mature's ex-con.

**MADDEST MOMENT** Binding an informant's mother to a wheelchair and pushing her down the stairs to her death.



### DAVID

THE GUEST (2014)

Downton's Dan Stevens reveals his dark side as a seemingly perfect stranger whose benevolent house call masks a deadly agenda.

**MADDEST MOMENT** Ruthlessly despatching four teenage bullies with a broken bottle, a pool cue and a fireball.





## PINKIE BROWN

*BRIGHTON ROCK (1947)*

Forget what you might remember about cuddly old 'Dickie' Attenborough; the late, great *Gandhi* director made his name in this John Boulting-directed take on Graham Greene's novel, playing the small-time hoodlum who runs a protection racket around Brighton race course.

**MADDEST MOMENT** Kicking off his plan to kill his own girlfriend Rose by entering a recording booth and cutting a disc with a message drenched in bile: "I hate you... you make me sick."

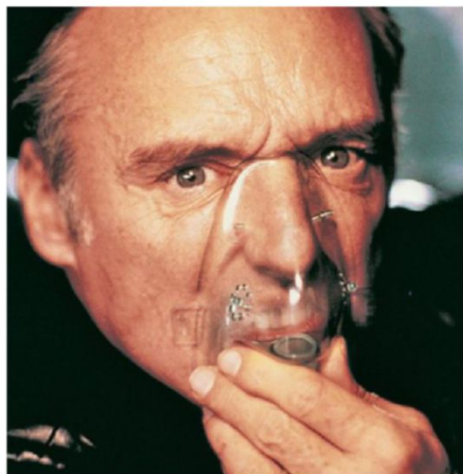


## FRANK BOOTH

*BLUE VELVET (1986)*

Dennis Hopper became Hollywood's favourite villain after his career-reviving role as Booth, a howling banshee of ire and vice whose every utterance comes packing an f-word. Kyle MacLachlan isn't kidding when he calls Frank a "very sick and dangerous man".

**MADDEST MOMENT** "Baby wants to fuck!" Introductions don't get more shocking than Hopper's initial appearance, storming into Isabella Rossellini's apartment to commit a violent sexual assault fuelled by amyl nitrate.



## RICHARD GECKO

*FROM DUSK TILL DAWN (1996)*

George Clooney has enough on his plate without a psychotic brother who likes to rape and murder when done robbing banks.

**MADDEST MOMENT** Richie very much imagining that hostage Juliette Lewis has asked him to perform an unlikely favour.



## BABY JANE HUDSON

*WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE? (1962)*

Bette Davis seethes and scowls through cruel close-ups as a resentful ex-child star torturing disabled sister Blanche.

Scenery? Devoured.

**MADDEST MOMENT** "You know we got rats?" Guess what Jane's got Blanche for lunch...



## THE JOKER

*THE DARK KNIGHT (2008)*

Some men just want to watch the world burn. And scream. And cower. Like the Joker, a grinning loon with a pathological addiction to chaos.

**MADDEST MOMENT** The pencil in the eye gag is brutal but the hospital scene is hard to beat for pure destructive delirium.



## J.D.

*HEATHERS (1988)*

Christian Slater turns high school into die school as a gun-toting rebel with a cause: to make bullying girls pay.

**MADDEST MOMENT** Blowing himself up in the climactic scene, just to light a cigarette for Winona Ryder.

## ANNIE WILKES

*MISERY (1990)*

"I'm your number one fan," Annie (Kathy Bates) tells author Paul Sheldon (James Caan) after rescuing his mangled body from a car wreck. Luckily, she's a nurse. Unluckily, she's crackers, chaining Paul to a typewriter and forcing him to revive her favourite character...

**MADDEST MOMENT** Enraged when she discovers Paul has been sneaking out of his room, Annie ensures he's bed-bound for good by (wince) hobbling him with a sledgehammer.



## HAYLEY STARK

*HARD CANDY (2005)*

Ellen Page had male filmgoers crossing their legs in discomfort as a teen vigilante with a penchant for predators.

**MADDEST MOMENT** Performing a mock castration ("Right or left testicle?") on Patrick Wilson's suspected paedophile.





# TOMMY DEVITO

GOODFELLAS (1990)

Thomas DeSimone, the basis for Joe Pesci's character in Scorsese's gangster classic, was a trigger-happy fruitcake who once gunned down an innocent pedestrian because he could. Small wonder his screen alter-ego's so hard to call, flipping on a dime from jocular braggadocio to a rage-fuelled maniac who thinks nothing of paying his mother a visit en route to a burial.

**MADDEST MOMENT** "Funny, how? How am I funny? What the fuck is so funny about me?" Largely improvised, Tommy's foul-mouthed attempted fake-out of Ray Liotta's Henry Hill leaves the latter perilously close to the same grisly fate that awaits Michael Imperioli's Spider.



MAKING OF

# Washington Heights

Adapting the award-winning play *FENCES* for the big screen, Denzel Washington shows off his powers both in front of and behind the camera. Total Film takes a front-row seat with an American classic... **WORDS** PAUL BRADSHAW



**B**roadway, 1987. Denzel Washington has just finished *Cry Freedom*, the film that would bring him to the world's attention, but he sits in the stalls of the 46th Street Theatre as an unknown thirty-something. James Earl Jones, Washington's hero, is on stage, leading the cast of *Fences* – the play that would win its author a Pulitzer, its cast a Tony and the young actor in the audience the seed of inspiration that he wouldn't stop nurturing for 30 years.

Written by August Wilson, *Fences* lets us into the lives of a working class family in '50s Pittsburgh. The father, Troy Maxson, is a garbage man who's still bitter about his failed baseball career. The mother, Rose, is devoted to him and their two children – teenage football player Cory and beatnik jazz musician Lyons. There's a brother, a best friend and a few bit-parts, but the whole play sprawls over a single backyard as Troy slowly, brutally, rips everyone's lives apart around him. It's a shocking, emotional masterpiece that stands comfortably alongside *Death Of A Salesman* and *A Streetcar Named Desire* in the American theatre,









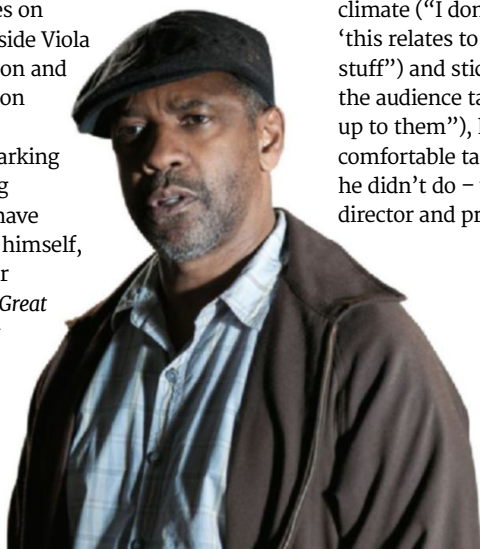


**ABOVE**  
Viola Davis and Denzel Washington revive the roles they played on Broadway, for which they both won Tonys.

and it's a play that Washington spent his whole career dipping into, waiting for the right time to revisit.

"About seven years ago, Scott Rudin sent me the screenplay that was written for James Earl Jones and Eddie Murphy in the '80s," says Washington, speaking to *Total Film* over high tea in a London hotel. "I read the first page and it said, 'Troy Maxson, aged 53'. I'm thinking I'm too young, because I'm still remembering Jones in the role, but then I think... Wait, I'm 55. I better hurry up! So I called Scott and told him I wanted to do it on stage while I still could."

Stepping into Jones' shoes on Broadway in 2010 alongside Viola Davis, Stephen Henderson and Mykelti Williamson, Washington helped the play scoop another armful of awards, this time sparking enough interest to start talking about the film again – and to have Washington decide to direct it himself, his third film as a director after *Antwone Fisher* (2002) and *The Great Debaters* (2007). "I don't know who talked me into that!" he laughs. "But yeah, August Wilson wrote a masterpiece."



I had a whole cast already in place... I'm no dummy, so I just went with what was already working."

Talking to Washington is like talking to one of his on-screen everymen. Humble to the point of self-deprecation, quick to laugh, ferociously intelligent, and deceptively easy going, he's one of the greatest actors of his generation – and a man who still likes to think of himself as just a guy doing a job. "All the heavy lifting was done by someone else," he shrugs, "my job was just to not mess it up."

Brushing off the big questions the film asks about America's current social climate ("I don't care about any of that, 'this relates to what's going on now' stuff") and sticky morality ("Whatever the audience takes from this is entirely up to them"), he's much more comfortable talking about anything that he didn't do – which, as the film's star, director and producer, isn't much.

"Thirty years ago or whatever it was, I did *A Soldier's Play*, and there were some great actors in the stage version that weren't used in the film – one of them by the name of Samuel L. Jackson," he smiles. "I always said that I'd never let that happen if it was up to me. But there was also no reason for me not to use the whole Broadway cast in *Fences*. Nobody knows it like them and they're all exceptional actors. Also, any film is always gonna be a whole lot better if it has Viola Davis in it!"

Back in 2010, Davis picked up a Tony for her stage performance as Rose – sandwiched between Oscar nominations for *Doubt* and *The Help* – in a role that was just as important for her as Troy was to Washington.

"From an African American perspective I would think anyone would have a response to August Wilson in that way," says Davis, catching up with *TF* in Los Angeles while her young

***"Viola gives one of the great performances of all time in this. Period"***  
Denzel Washington





# VIOLA DAVIS

*Rose reveals her thorns...*

## Do you still remember reading *Fences* for the first time?

Absolutely. I read it in college and it was... transformative. August Wilson's characters speak in a way that is absolutely based on the vernacular of African Americans, but at the same time it's an elevated poetry. It has a profound effect on you when you hear it.

## Why do you think Wilson isn't on more reading lists in schools?

I think people have to understand that dramatic literature written by African Americans has the same value as Caucasian literature – that's basically what it is. August Wilson has the same value as the Edward Albees, the Tennessee Williams, the Eugene O'Neills, the Arthur Millers.

## What kind of woman is Rose?

You never want an opinion as an actor – it's like lawyers not wanting to know if their client is guilty or innocent! Your opinion is just to love them. You have to. I love Rose more than ever. I love her for what she does – and for what she represents today, in an age when women judge each other so harshly.

## What are the differences between playing her on stage and screen?

It's always hard to play private in public. It's the absolute foundation and basis of acting, but it's hard. Acting is like getting naked in front of hundreds of people and turning around really, really slowly... A lot of the scenes in *Fences* are intensely personal and private, and that works so much better with four walls instead of three.

## How relevant are the social themes of the play going to be to modern audiences?

This is a story about a family, pure and simple. It's about a man at the centre of a family who doesn't understand how he's destroying it. It's a story about an anti-hero, in the same way *Death Of A Salesman* is. You're seeing all these lives unravel because this man doesn't understand that he is our god. We rely on him for everything, and he screws it up. It's the classic human story.

## What's your own take on Troy? Do you sympathise with him?

I see him as a man who's doing the best he can with what he's given. I see Troy very much like I see my dad. His life very much mirrored Troy's, but the minute he died he took a part of me with him. I understood that he loved me, and that's how I see Troy – completely without judgment. **PB**





# MAKING OF

daughter bounces off the walls behind her. "It's a beautiful, painful journey that the play follows. It's unexpected. It's a journey that brings out beautiful things in characters that we think we already know, and it challenges us on a really profound level. The boldness of the whole play is just staggering."

**W**ith the emotional weight of the film shifting to Rose's shoulders after a blindsiding mid-point reveal, Davis has to deal with some of the toughest scenes of her career in *Fences*, giving Washington the chance to step slightly out of the frame and focus on her instead.

"She kills it!" he laughs. "I was like, 'Why do I even have to be in this movie?!' She just kills it. Viola gives one of the great performances of all time in this. Period. I've been around a long time and you never know what's going to happen with Oscars and awards, but... she's gonna win it this year. She has to."

With Davis and the rest of the Broadway actors returning to their roles, Washington was only left with Troy's two youngest children to cast (both original actors now too old to return for the movie). With the third lead part of Cory having to go to someone who could hold his own against Washington in the film's most explosive scenes, he knew he needed a young actor who could catch-up fast. Auditioning *The Leftovers* star Jovan Adepo, Washington "pushed him a little bit" to see how he might handle the rigours of the play.



**ABOVE**  
The whole movie was filmed on real streets in Pittsburgh's Hill District.

Adepo puts it slightly differently. "It was the most exhausting audition process that I've ever been through," he laughs. "I met him and he gave me a hug, shook my hand, and then, bang, he's in the scene. He'd try and throw me off - he'd take the script out of my hand, he'd break up my dialogue, make me stop and go in the middle of scenes, he'd scream at me, kiss me on the cheek, just trying to see if I could keep my composure. It's like we were playing a game of tennis - he hit the ball over

the net and I was just doing my very best to hit it back. It was intimidating, to say the least..."

Even more so when he won the part and had to join a cast of seasoned veterans that had all been working together, on the same material, for years. "Everyone on set was a giant to me," says Adepo. "I've re-enacted plenty of Denzel's characters in the mirror over the years. But they all made me feel so welcome - and, more than anything, Denzel felt like a teacher to

***"Denzel said, 'Slap the piss out of him! Hit him as many times as you want.' So I did."***

**Viola Davis**

## From stage to screen

Washington and Davis aren't the only thespians to move their characters from stage to screen...



### **Marlon Brando** **A Streetcar Named Desire** (1951)

When Marlon Brando burned the Broadway boards as an unknown actor in Tennessee Williams' play, he was so incendiary that he wrote his own ticket to Hollywood with his star performance - bringing director Elia Kazan with him to make the movie.



### **Rex Harrison** **My Fair Lady** (1964)

Rex Harrison spoke all of his songs in the Broadway musical - but at least he was good looking enough to win the same role on film. Julie Andrews was reportedly deemed not 'photogenic' enough to play Eliza Doolittle on screen, so her part went to Audrey Hepburn (who couldn't sing either).



### **Jane Horrocks** **Little Voice** (1998)

When British director Jim Cartwright heard Jane Horrocks singing Ethel Merman songs in the wings of another play, he wrote *The Rise And Fall Of Little Voice* especially for her. When Mark Herman adapted the play for the screen, there was no other choice for the lead.



### **Dustin Hoffman** **Death Of A Salesman** (1985)

For most people, Dustin Hoffman is the definitive Willy Loman. And so he should be - having played the role on stage throughout its 97 performances in the 1984 Broadway revival, alongside Kate Reid, John Malkovich and Stephen Lang.



### **Anne Bancroft** **The Miracle Worker** (1962)

Helen Keller's autobiography took Anne Bancroft to Hollywood when she reprised her Tony-winning lead role in *The Miracle Worker* - catapulting her into starring roles in '60s classics such as *The Pumpkin Eater*, *7 Women* and *The Graduate*. **PB**



# FENCES

night to manage the workload – not that he'd ever admit to it being a tough job, "compared to what other people do". But watching the film, the more remarkable thing is just how powerful Washington's own performance manages to be despite all the extra work and extra pressure, with Troy Maxson burning the screen as one of the most complex characters we've ever seen from him – and certainly one of the most talkative.

**H**e doesn't shut up for 45 minutes!" laughs Washington, whose vast reams of dialogue must have seemed even tougher when he had to do it on stage every night. "You have to get comfortable with it. You can't be ad-libbing and you can't be searching. There's a rhythm to it that you have to respect, just like Shakespeare. You have to tune your ear into that musicality.

"For example, Troy is talking to his son and he says the line, 'What dat mean to me, Bonnie workin'? I don't care if she workin'. Go ask her for 10 dollars if she workin'.' Talkin' 'bout Bonnie workin', why ain't you workin'?' Wilson didn't write, 'What does that mean to me,' he wrote, 'What dat mean to me.' So there's a rhythm, and there's an inherent humour – but only if it's sung."

True enough, a lot of *Fences* is darkly funny, but that humour sits alongside some truly gut-wrenching scenes of family crisis – with all of the pain and tragedy wholly caused by Troy.

"You don't know whether to hate him, like him, feel sorry for him or whatever," admits Washington.

"On Broadway I'd get just as many gasps as I got cheers. We were editing this movie and Vin Diesel was next door editing his film.

He came in with his sister and I showed them a few scenes. We put it on and I started hearing this tutting sound. I looked over and Vin is watching it, smiling, but his sister is talking back to my character on screen. She'd only seen 20 seconds of this thing and she's already joining in, making these judgements and frowning at me. *That's* the power of August Wilson."

And that, too, is the power of *Fences*. Though Denzel Washington would probably never admit it...

FENCES OPENS ON 17 FEBRUARY.



**TOP**  
Sleep-deprived Washington starred, directed, produced... and even cooked.

**LEFT**  
British-born Adepo was one of the few cast members not to have been in the stage version.



me. He guided me through the whole process. He made me feel like I knew what I was doing."

Obviously an actor's director, Washington used everything that he'd picked up from 30 years of experience working with some of the best directors in Hollywood ("I stole from them all..."), and encouraged his whole cast to make the most of their own character choices. But whenever they did need encouragement, there was no one better to help steer them back on the right track.

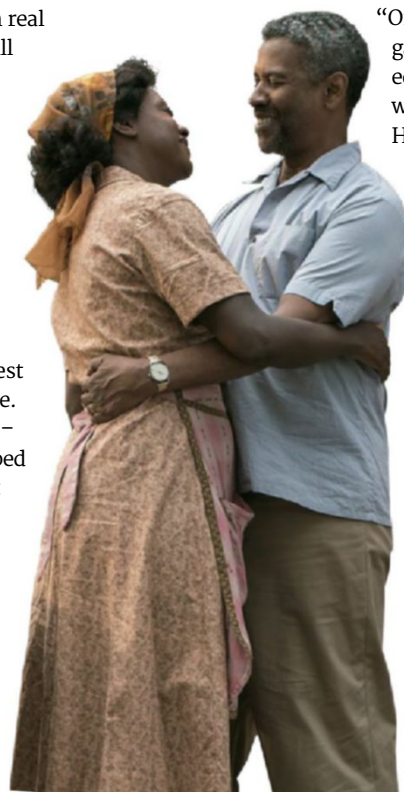
"Oh my God, I had no sleep for days worrying about one scene," remembers Davis. "My big monologue with Cory is four or five pages long. I kept reading it over and over again but I never really got it. One day Denzel watched me do the scene, and he said, 'Let's do it again, but this time I want you to slap him. Hard.' I was like, 'Really?' He said, 'Sure, slap the piss out of him! Hit him as many times as you want. Take all that pain and all that emotion and slap him.' So I did. And it worked. It opened the whole scene up and made me get it. Denzel told me, 'It's not a monologue.

It's not about you. It's about him. He's the one listening to you. Help *him*.' We were all so lucky to have a director who actually understands that."

Wanting to get as far away from the usual stage-to-screen stuffiness as possible, he decided to shoot in real rooms, on real streets in the Hill District of Pittsburgh.

"Being able to shoot on location made such a difference," he explains. "It was tricky for the cinematographer, but it gave the whole thing an honesty. I didn't want to take out a wall. I didn't want green screens. I didn't want to shoot half of a scene on a stage and film the rest two weeks later somewhere else. And I wanted that authenticity – and that feeling of being cramped in a small room that you didn't really want to be in."

Acting, directing, producing (and cooking the occasional barbecue for the locals), Washington got himself down to two hours sleep a





WORDS JAMES MOTTRAM PORTRAITS FABRIZIO MALTESE



I WANT TO LOSE  
AS MUCH CONTROL  
AS POSSIBLE. YOU  
SHOULDN'T BE DOING  
ANYTHING UNLESS IT  
SCARES YOU A BIT



# KRISTEN STEWART

Twilight turned her into one of the biggest A-list players on the planet. But Kristen Stewart has always had bigger ambitions than becoming a studio starlet. Now, with three new movies on the way – including a lead in Olivier Assayas' psychodrama *Personal Shopper* – Total Film meets the edgiest actresses of her generation.









T

here's a joke in the recent movie *Why Him?*, when Bryan Cranston's Michigan father sees a picture of James Franco's tech entrepreneur with his arm around Kristen Stewart. "Who's that?" he asks. "Rather a Plain Jane." While the humour derives from Cranston's square Midwesterner not recognising one of the most photographed women on the planet, there's a little teasing here of the 26-year-old Stewart – famed for not smiling on the red carpet.

Today, when *Total Film* encounters the actress at a beachside restaurant in Cannes, she's looking anything but Plain Jane. With her hair dyed blonde and swept back, her green eyes accentuated with dark eye shadow, she's sporting a white vest-top, black trainers and navy trousers. Around her neck, silver chains – including a mini-padlock. On her right arm, a tattoo inspired by Picasso's *Guernica*.

Stewart seems comfortable here, among serious filmmakers. Playing the vampire-loving Bella Swan in the *Twilight*

franchise may have turned her into a star, but she's not one for towing the Hollywood line. "American movies are so packaged and delivered and they think for you," she sighs. "It's in keeping with people's obsession with these packaged and delivered little stories in the tabloids. It's so easily consumable."

This is no throwaway comment. Born and raised in Los Angeles, where her mother was a script supervisor, she became a tabloid target after the huge success of the *Twilight* franchise, her off-screen relationships (*Twilight* co-star Robert Pattinson, *Snow White And The Huntsman* director Rupert Sanders) garnering as many column inches as the films themselves. After the attention peaked, Stewart wisely ducked out of the limelight and didn't make a film for two years (though her recent relationships with assistant Alicia Cargile and singer St. Vincent have made headlines).

When she returned, it was with a blistering set of indies, from Alzheimer's drama *Still Alice*, to Guantanamo Bay tale *Camp X-Ray*, to Olivier Assayas' *Clouds Of Sils Maria* – which saw her become the first US actress to win a César in France. It was almost like the Stewart of old – who went from acting Jodie Foster off the screen in David Fincher's *Panic Room*, aged 10, to working with the likes of Sean Penn, Robert De Niro and James Gandolfini.

If Stewart has always put filmmakers first, it's never clearer than with her current crop of work. Back with Assayas for his Parisian spook story *Personal Shopper*, playing a starlet's assistant who

moonlights as a medium, she's also the titular character's anti-war sister in Ang Lee's post-Iraq War tale *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk*. While in Kelly Reichardt's triptych of female-centric tales, *Certain Women*, she plays a law graduate-turned-tutor in America's bleak northwest.

Beyond this, she's already made good on her promise to start making films, writing and directing *Come Swim*, part of an anthology of short films commissioned by fashion lifestyle website Refinery29. "That is one pointed change in direction," she says. As she said recently that Jodie Foster told her: "The first thing you're going to learn is that you don't have much to learn – and that you're totally ready." The baton has been passed...

**In *Personal Shopper*, you play Maureen, a medium who is grieving over the loss of her twin. How did director Olivier Assayas pitch it to you?**

He didn't say anything. I didn't realise it was a horror movie when I read it. I knew there were supernatural aspects but because of her fierce commitment to looking ghosts in the face, I never thought she was afraid. I always thought she was just curious. I was like, "She's not going to be scared of the ghosts ever." But that's not real. So when I was there... as much as you want to see something and follow that curiosity, it's hard to do it. Facing the unknown is obviously terrifying. When I first read it, it wasn't apparent to me. I thought it was really existential, I thought it was sad and really lonely and it was about grief, and where grief can lead you – which is to very illuminated places. Out of that darkness comes wonderful realisations. And it really puts you in your body and makes you appreciate life.

**Did you feel like you wanted to do something different here?**

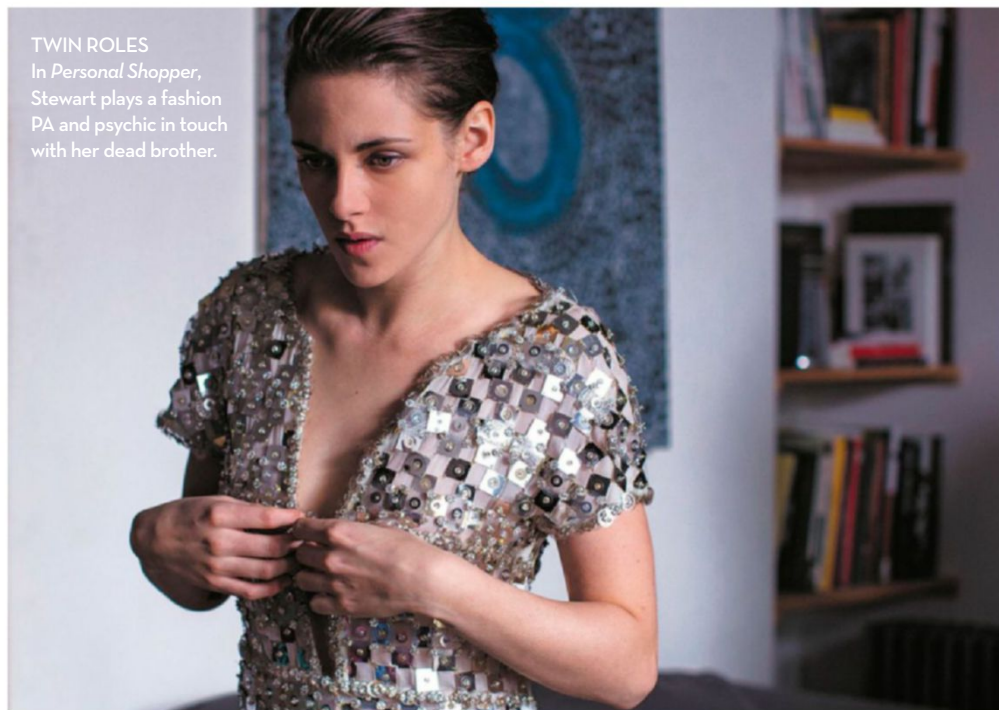
That's always the goal on any movie I've worked on. This experience just provided the necessary extremes that coincidentally allowed me to fall harder than I ever have. That's always the goal. Within very set up parameters, I want to lose as much control as possible. I genuinely feel like you shouldn't be doing anything unless it scares you a little bit. I don't want to go over territory I've covered before. I want to always keep that exploration curious.

***Personal Shopper* is your second film with Assayas, after *Clouds Of Sils Maria*. Curiously, you play assistants in both. How do you compare them?**

I think the difference between the two characters is huge. Valentine, my

#### TWIN ROLES

In *Personal Shopper*, Stewart plays a fashion PA and psychic in touch with her dead brother.







character in *Sils Maria*, she was really invisible. You wanted to know more about her because of how little you saw of her. You don't know anything about her life at all: her interests, who she loves, what she loves, what drives her. It's a really faithful interaction. There is love there and that dynamic is interesting and they have very different perspectives on art and what drives you to make art. But she's very content. Valentine is pretty self-assured. I feel like she was very steady. Whereas Maureen is quite the opposite. She's stuck in a very dark place in her mind. The chains that can hold you, these cerebral chains that don't allow you to live momentarily or live at all and sometimes feel like they're going to last forever.

**The long scene where you're texting an unknown recipient on the Eurostar is remarkable. Assayas said there were no doubles, that it was always your hands typing. Are you really that fast?**

Oh my God, I'm extremely dexterous! I felt a huge pressure when we were shooting

the texting scenes to condense the time in which that story is told because I didn't want people to lose interest. So I wanted it out as fast as I possibly could get it out.

**Texting back and forth, it really increases the scene's tension...**

Yeah, and you look at the little dots [*on the iPhone text message*]... and then the dots go away and you're like, "Oh, did you delete everything you were going to write? What was that?" You'll never see it! There is that language. It's a different language. The way you punctuate things, the timing of it, how

long those dots are there compared to how long the text is. You watch someone text for an hour and all they say is: "Yeah." You're like, "Oh, did it take you that long to figure that out?!" Also, the fact that it's so clearly my hands... I could say a lot with how the texts were written. I never got bored with that because you could hold a lot of tension in your hands. I hold a lot of tension in my hands! That's me. I don't change who I am. I'm not a schizophrenic.

What I want to do when I bring characters to life is to really reveal myself – there was a reason I was attracted to it. So I'm never hiding. I really revelled in making those close-ups on the text messages seem really interactive and nuanced and not insert shots. They're close-ups. They should feel like close-ups on me.

**The film talks about fashion and fame. Are these the new gods we worship?**

There are farcical elements to every form of communication. Right now, I'm being as honest as I possibly can, but I'm manipulating you to my best ability, to make you feel the way I want you to feel. And so within our relatively newly found way of sharing ourselves with each other, which is through technology, it's so much easier to hide and it's so much easier to manipulate that... I don't know how to complete the sentence. But we're all aware of that. It's not something I think we're entirely subject to. In terms of fashion, there's nothing wrong with appreciating physical beauty and aesthetic. That's also a form of spiritualism. That's what makes us human. And not everyone really cares about it. There are some people who can sit and look at a sunset and cry, and there are some people who never look twice at it.

**RIGHT NOW, I'M  
MANIPULATING  
YOU TO MY  
BEST ABILITY**



→ So the people drawn to fashion for those really genuine reasons are the artists, the ones who can appreciate that art. And the ones drawn to it because of the attention it brings and the potential popularity contest they might win... that's just self-serving. It's really selfish and not beautiful at all.

## How do you find the glamour side of the industry? Is it vital to have a stylist?

Nobody can style themselves, because we have jobs to do. We're working on other things. I have a really open and involved collaboration with my stylist. I'm not remotely dressed by someone. But I've been working with her since I was 13, so she can actually highlight who I am, rather than make me something else.

## When you hit the red carpet, it's always your choices then?

I feel like I dress myself, but there's no way I could do that alone, because I don't have time to scour the world for the pieces. There's a lot of material and clothes out there. Also, I'm into it. I fall into the category of someone who is genuinely attracted to fashion because it is the shiny thing... I'm like a moth to a flame. And that's purely animalistic. It's not attention-seeking. I find it pretty.

## How big is your clothing collection at home? Huge?

I have a lot of sneakers! I'm really sneaker obsessed. But, no, not really. All this stuff we wear is being lent to us. I try to keep little pieces that feel like mine, but I don't have that much stuff.

## You're also playing a supporting role in Ang Lee's *Billy Lynn's Long Halfmile Walk*. How was that experience?

It was great. I have a really small part – like three or four scenes in the movie. But the scenes I'm in, I function as the mouthpiece for the more liberally inclined side of things. I play Billy's big sister who wants to persuade him to not go back to war. And so, a lot of emotions that everyone else in the film are completely avoiding and pretending aren't there... it was my job to represent those emotions and the humanity of what it means to be decorated for something so violent.

## Was that tricky with little screen time?

Yeah... sometimes, if you don't feel things in the right moment, you don't tell the story correctly and you only have three

scenes to do it, you can ruin a whole movie. But Ang's so compassionate, honestly. I wish I had better words for it. He's so sweet. There's something so zen about his nature that it's really easy to be emotional around him. He's very in tune with his emotions and that's pretty contagious.

## You're in Kelly Reichardt's *Certain Women*. What do you admire about her?

Most people do not focus on... people go, "What's the most important part? Show me the moment where something happens." And that's what we're used to seeing in movies. If you can look at the stuff that goes on in between stuff, that's when things start living and it's really vulnerable to *not* play something or not be expected to play something. All of a sudden you start revealing things rather than displaying things, and that's what I love about her movies.

## Do you see any common denominators in your roles?

Er... yeah, me! I'm really not a character actor. I know a lot of actors that say they can hide behind characters and they can really step outside of themselves. I feel like when I'm doing really stimulating, soul-fulfilling work is when I'm finding myself and not hiding. So I would say that there is probably a throughline. I don't usually step outside and analyse my career as a whole.

## Your mother was a script supervisor, so were you always around movies?

I grew up on a movie set, eating craft service! I was an extra in movies all the time. I did a little part in *The Flintstones In Viva Rock Vegas*. I'm at a fair and I'm totally Flintstoned out! It's quite funny. That was my first acting experience!

## Is it true your parents tried to convince you not to act?

Absolutely. They didn't really understand why. And I didn't either. It was an arbitrary decision. It was just like, "Yeah, I can do this. I can go on auditions." They were like, "Do you realise what you're getting into?" My mom was like, "I'm not going to be a stage mom!" And unfortunately, she was.

## One of your very early roles was in *Panic Room*. You were pretty young then...

I was 10. I was very aware of Jodie [Foster]. I didn't know who David Fincher was.

# I GREW UP ON A MOVIE SET, I WAS AN EXTRA IN MOVIES ALL THE TIME



## FIVE STAR TURNS

### PANIC ROOM 2002

After two appearances as an uncredited extra, Stewart came to prominence as Jodie Foster's daughter in David Fincher's thriller. "I was kind of freaked out at first," she says.

### TWILIGHT 2008

It split audiences into devoted Twi-hards and the indifferent, but impact was huge. "There's something there that I'm endlessly, and to this day, fucking proud of," said Stewart.

### ADVENTURELAND 2009

The first of three collaborations (*American Ultra*, *Café Society*) with Jesse Eisenberg, an ideal showcase for Stewart's combo of unattainable cool and believable vulnerability.

### ON THE ROAD 2012

Stewart enlivens every scene she's a part of in the so-so Kerouac adaptation. "I really had to dig pretty deep to find it in me to actually play a person like this," she says.

### STILL ALICE 2014

Heartbreaking as a young woman who has to deal with her mother's onset Alzheimer's disease, Stewart shares the movie's most touching scenes with Julianne Moore. "It's such an important film," says Stewart. **MM**







I wasn't a sheltered child. I think I'd seen *Taxi Driver* and *Silence Of The Lambs*! People always told me I looked like her too.

## Did your idea of acting evolve?

It changed when I got a little bit older – I did a movie called *Speak* when I was 13, that really got inside me. It also really affected other people. It was a movie about date rape and I did it so young, and I did this public service announcement afterwards on Lifetime. This hotline that exploded – like 200,000 callers. And I went, "Wow, it wasn't just me that was affected by this movie." It really touched people.

## You really stepped up a gear in 2007, when you worked on Sean Penn's *Into The Wild*. What drove you to that?

I want to work with people who are inspiring. It's an ambitious thing. A bold, daunting thing – to work with somebody like Sean Penn. That's intimidating. Only because you want to be good.

## A year later you co-starred with Robert De Niro in *What Just Happened*. Was playing his daughter intimidating too?

My experience with De Niro was so far from anything I expected... I met him and he was so self-conscious! He could tell what a big deal it is for any young actor to meet him. There was a full-on rehearsal process. Actors like that, who aren't doing it for the wrong reasons, are never really intimidating. They help you. They're excited to see somebody who cares about it as much as they do. Actors that have that intimidating presence – like "I've been around longer than you" – maybe they just don't see me as a good actor. But anybody like that... it's something to be very excited about, seeing young people come up and try and do new things.

## Then came your biggest role – Bella Swan. Did the success of the first *Twilight* take you by surprise?

Yeah. We were aware of the cultish nature of the fans, but we thought that they were pretty exclusive. We thought it was a rather small, devoted fanbase and it would be a cult movie. All of the effects stuff, it didn't seem like that would be a big deal. We did one day of green screen.

## Can you remember what first intrigued you about the story?

Most love stories start out where the girl is really searching for something and she really needs to fill a void. But Bella's slapped in the face by this thing. She's like, "I have to be a part of it but it's not the right thing that I should be doing."



## KRISTEN STEWART IN NUMBERS

**\$4.4bn**

Kristen Stewart's total box-office gross to date.

**77%**

of that box-office gross from the *Twilight* franchise.

**1**

Stewart's ranking on Forbes' highest-paid actresses list in 2012.

**17**

Length in minutes of Stewart's short film *Come Swim*, which debuts at this month's Sundance Film Festival.

**6**

Songs sung on *The Runaways'* soundtrack.





➡ And it's very mature, to trust emotions like that, and not get hung up on what other people think you should be doing.

**You followed the first *Twilight* with *Welcome To The Rileys*, playing a teenage stripper. Is it true you wanted to sleep on the streets to prepare?**

I really wanted to! It was the first time that I did feel like I wanted to do that sort of preparation! I didn't wash my hair! But to be in a mind state of just survival, there's no vanity. You hate yourself. Abused children, they're so broken... I talked to some people who worked in a strip club that I was supposed to work at. It's off Bourbon Street [in New Orleans], so not one of the commercial ones. Really one of the dingier places, where they would hire underage girls.

**Shortly afterwards, you teamed up with Walter Salles on Jack Kerouac's *On The Road*. Were you a big fan of the book?**

I was 14 or 15 when I read it for the first time. I've read it a hundred times and each time it was a different experience. It opened a lot of doors for me at that age. That's when you start to be able to choose your family, choose who your friends are, rather than just being environmentally surrounded by who you are, surrounded by circumstance. You actually start to decide who's important to you, who you want to be pushed by. And I went mad for these characters. I wanted to keep up with them. I identified personally much more with Sal. I just wanted to keep up. It introduced me to a lot of writers. It was the first time I've ever ripped through a book and actually liked it. It got me into reading.

**What was it like to shoot?**

On that set, I felt like a fucking baby. On that set I really did feel like my character felt in the beginning of the movie. Not out of my element, just standing on my tiptoes, running after them. But that's good. That's how I should feel.

**All the while, you were making *Twilight* movies. How do you look back on the franchise now?**

I love looking back on it. I'm lucky I could do movies in between, or else I would've gone crazy. I would've lost my mind playing the same character that long. But I loved it – I loved thinking about it.

**What intrigued you about working with Woody Allen on *Café Society*?**

He has a really unique perspective. It's one that I'm interested in. I love how his movies have a casual lightness – it puts



you in a certain mood, so that when something comes at you that is meaningful and poignant, you're caught off-guard. It's like, "Wow, I was just having a good time and now this is really something real." I love that. The conversations are just fucking fantastic; those are the conversations I have with Jesse [Eisenberg]. I genuinely feel like the reason I like hanging out with him is because our interactions are very reminiscent of those conversations that take place in [Allen's] movies, consistently.

**You've worked with Eisenberg three times, on *Adventureland*, *American Ultra* and *Café Society*. He's said you used to intimidate him. Did you know that?**

No! Jesse is so smart. He used to intimidate me. But now there's a warmth that we share that allows me to keep up with him. It used to be debilitating. I used to be like, "I'm not going to try and be on your level and try and engage," and now we can really run together. But I don't know... honestly, life really overwhelms him because of his intelligence. Situations are really over-stimulating for him. I think he's one of those special minds. I have a nature that is really in stark contrast to his, so I think it trips him out.

**In that you don't care what others think of you?**

I care that the opinion is affected by genuine things that involve me and things that are not me. Your impression is entirely yours and subjective and no one's impression of me is wrong. It's based on an accumulative experience of watching whatever interviews or movies or pictures you've seen of me, and that's not wrong. But I function from a very... it's hard to regret mistakes that you've made creatively or within social dynamics. If you're being real, there's a fairly undeniable confidence

THREE'S A CHARM  
Stewart with Jesse Eisenberg  
in *Café Society*, one of  
the three films they've  
made together.



## I REALLY DEEPLY CARE WHAT PEOPLE THINK [ABOUT ME]

that you can harness. But I really deeply care what people think. I'm an actor: all I care about is being understood. All I want to do is convey myself. When I feel like I haven't, it drives me crazy. If I feel like I haven't done a good job or if I've projected a weird, tainted version of myself because I feel insecure, I always walk away from those situations being really regretful. So as I've gotten a little bit older, I feel, "You're not going to be happy unless you just breathe through this and stay completely yourself." At the end of the day, you can own that but what you don't want to own is saying things you don't mean and trying to be something that you're not.

**What do you love about acting?**

What I love about my job, whether it's with an actor or director or crew member, you stand up and raise your hand and say you

love something and someone agrees with you and suddenly you can both love it more because you're together. And I, in a very, very unique and incredibly rare way, can get to less intimately share that with a million people, or more.

**Is it easy to lead a normal life now?**

This is the craziest that it gets. When you're promoting a movie, of course you have to be a little bit more aware of what you do and where you go. I feel very, very free right now. If you're coming from an honest place, there's never anything to ashamed of. If people see it, so be it. People always ask me how it feels to be a role model, that a lot of girls look up to me... people choose their role models. And if you start thinking about how people are going to perceive you, you're lying and that in itself is not a good role model.

BILLY LYNN'S LONG HALFTIME WALK OPENS ON 10 FEBRUARY. CERTAIN WOMEN OPENS ON 3 MARCH. PERSONAL SHOPPER OPENS ON 17 MARCH.

## KRISTEN STEWART FAN CLUB

"It reminds me of how Heath Ledger used to work for me. If you saw him in one movie – like *Monster's Ball* – you just remembered him. He was like the emotional core. Kristen gave me that vibe."

Ang Lee

"On *Panic Room* she was that little 10-year-old girl I just loved so much. She was the coolest kid ever, and I couldn't wait to meet her when she grew up."

Jodie Foster

"It was a pleasure for me, working with her, to witness somebody that's got that enormous reserve of emotion at their fingertips. She has a tremendous amount of feeling. It was a joy to watch her access it."

Julianne Moore



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WHY BRIDGET JONES IS A  
MARVEL OF BRIT CINEMA



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| AKIRA KUROSAWA'S DREAMS      | ★★★★  | P119 |
| BAD MOMS                     | ★★★★  | P115 |
| BEN-HUR                      | ★★    | P114 |
| BLAIR WITCH                  | ★★★★  | P115 |
| THE BLUE LAMP                | ★★★★  | P118 |
| BRIDGET JONES'S BABY         | ★★★★  | P112 |
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| DONNIE DARKO                 | ★★★★★ | P118 |
| ETHEL & ERNEST               | ★★★★  | P115 |
| THE GIRL ON THE TRAIN        | ★★★★  | P114 |
| THE GUYVER                   | ★★★★  | P119 |
| HUNT FOR THE WILDERPEOPLE    | ★★★★★ | P116 |
| JINNAH                       | ★★★★  | P119 |
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#### THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN

|                                                |      |      |
|------------------------------------------------|------|------|
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| THE MAN FROM LARAMIE                           | ★★★★ | P119 |
| MECHANIC: RESURRECTION                         | ★★★★ | P115 |
| MISS PEREGRINE'S HOME FOR<br>PECULIAR CHILDREN | ★★★★ | P115 |
| MORGAN                                         | ★★   | P115 |
| POPSTAR: NEVER STOP<br>NEVER STOPPING          | ★★★★ | P114 |
| THE PURGE: ELECTION YEAR                       | ★★   | P115 |
| RUPTURE                                        | ★★   | P115 |
| SOMNUS                                         | ★    | P115 |
| THE TRANSFORMERS: THE MOVIE                    | ★★★★ | P118 |
| USS INDIANAPOLIS:                              |      |      |
| MEN OF COURAGE                                 | ★★   | P115 |
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## happy event

LONG OVERDUE, MS. JONES STILL DELIVERS...

### BRIDGET JONES'S BABY <sup>15</sup>

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OUT NOW Digital HD 30 JANUARY DVD, BD EXTRAS Making Of, Deleted/Extended scenes, Gag reel



#### SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

##### JUNIOR 1994

Pregnancy-com with Emma Thompson (and an up-the-duff Arnie).

##### BRIDGET JONES'S DIARY 2001

Blue soup, crap Christmas jumpers and "Mr. Tits-Pervert". Classic.

##### KNOCKED UP 2007

Judd Apatow tackles the morning sickness after the night before.

**T**he big pants are gone. So are the ciggies and the diary. But more than a decade after Bridget Jones last blundered through public embarrassments and posh love triangles, everybody's favourite cringe-magnet is as adorably befuddled as ever in *Bridget Jones's Baby*. Here's a threequel that seeks to remind us why, in an age of superheroes and McFranchises, sometimes all you need for a good time is a pissed forty-something and a, um, yurt.

British audiences concurred – on release, Bridge's third go-around became the highest-grossing romcom ever at the UK box office. Across the pond it was a different story – its US gross was a measly \$24m, against the original's \$72m. Older (though not necessarily wiser), writing on an iPad instead of in a diary and still prone to

calamitous eff-ups, she is, as Renée Zellweger notes on the disc's 18-minute Making Of, still "our Bridget". Just, y'know, 43, but as single as ever and hitting the music festivals hard with hip newsroom colleague Miranda (Sarah Solemani). Middle-aged she may be, but she remains the quintessential Brit hero –

as much a part of the London landscape as any of the skyscrapers crowding her Borough Market flat.

Of course, certain things have fallen by the wayside. Daniel Cleaver's ditched in the first five minutes (he's also roundly ignored in this disc's extras), but his no-show allows Bridget to evolve beyond the sort of lazy storytelling that hampered 2004's *Bridget Jones: The Edge Of Reason* (a trilogy boxset is also out on 30 January). Unlike that sequel – notably not directed by Sharon Maguire, who returns here – this has genuine surprises in store.

#### DADDY ISSUES

Because, yes, Bridge is preggers. And with Colin Firth's Mark Darcy spared the same fate as his literary counterpart (see Helen Fielding's third *Jones* novel), *BJB* stages a romantic tug of war between our heroine's past (cosy,



Bridge still knows how to make an entrance...



uptight Darcy) and possible shiny new future (Patrick Dempsey's online dating guru Jack). Naturally, after two separate nights of passion, she has no idea who her baby daddy is, and the ensuing hijinks – hospital scans, joint pre-natal classes – bubble with awkward comedy.

"There's life in the old dog yet," is Bridget's confident dismissal of those who might ask why, 12 years after *TEOR*, she's back on screen – but that extended hiatus proves all to the good.

By catching up with Bridget in a new decade, with newfound confidence, new problems and, yes, a new weight, screenwriters Emma Thompson, Dan Mazer and Fielding make the perennial singleton relevant again, conjuring the zeitgeist-iness of 2001's *Diary*.

That film remains as spunky and quotable as ever ("Come the fuck on, Bridget!"), and this threequel does for forty-somethings what *BJD* did for thirty-somethings. As Bridget contends with FaceTime, hashtags, 'Gangnam Style' and hipster beards, we discover that time may have moved on, but our heroine's definitely not been left behind (there's even a compelling argument for authenticity in our romance-slaying social-media age).

### GUILT TRIP

"It's rather like coming back to an old friend," comments Firth on the film's Making Of. Or, you might say, slipping into your favourite pair of "absolutely enormous panties". It's not difficult to

see why he admits to marvelling at Zellweger – clearly, none of this would work without her.

The Texas native enjoyed a lengthy break of her own before making *BJB*, and her comeback proves she's lost none of her sparkle. Together with Firth, she finds new wrinkles (easy) in old friendships, and there's genuine warmth between both the characters and the actors playing them – something evident in the disc's brisk gag reel, which includes Firth apologising profusely off-camera to Zellweger when he trips and drops her on a rainy street.

Forget Bridge's baby-brained muddle; there's a comforting marriage of the old and new here. The snow-dusted villages and return of Mum (Gemma Jones still has all the best lines) are classic Bridge. Talk of Spilfs (yeah, "spinsters") perhaps less so, but Jack's a fine action-man suitor, making the central conflict more compelling than it might have been if Cleaver were still around. Thompson's no-nonsense midwife Dr. Rawlings, meanwhile, is a brilliant creation.

US audiences may have favoured a homegrown hero in the form of Clint Eastwood's *Sully*, but Bridget's return should be celebrated – here's a movie about a woman in her forties that, too-neat finale aside, refuses to bow to convention. And while a sly coda hints this may not be the last we've seen of Bridge (or a certain floppy-haired grotbag), the prospect of a further entry in Bridget's diary another decade down the line is a surprisingly rosy prospect. Bridget Jones's Menopause, anyone? **Josh Winning**

**TOP**  
Sally Phillips returns as straight-talking buddy Shazza.

**ABOVE**  
With Hugh Grant's Cleaver off the scene, Patrick Dempsey steps up for love rival duties.

## 'THIS DOES FOR FORTY-SOMETHINGS WHAT DIARY DID FOR THIRTY-SOMETHINGS'





Blunt missed the memo about eye contact on public transport.

## rail problems

A BUMPY PAGE-TO-SCREEN JOURNEY...

### THE GIRL ON THE TRAIN 15

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OUT 28 JANUARY Digital HD 6 FEBRUARY DVD, BD

EXTRAS Commentary, Deleted/Extended scenes

**T**he perfect commuter read becomes a less-than-perfect film in the hands of Tate Taylor (*The Help*). Its engrossing story of an alcoholic's attempts to solve a missing-person case is compromised by a transatlantic location switch and the casting of cut-glass bombshell Emily Blunt as its supposedly haggard lead. Yet while the *Gone Girl* comparisons are off the mark, this glossy adap of Paula Hawkins' bestseller still does an efficient job of moulding its dizzying mix of flashbacks, multiple perspectives and unreliable narration into a coherent, if not always credible whole.

Blunt doesn't completely convince as Rachel, who has a maudlin obsession with her sorrowful ex (Justin Theroux) and his new bride (Rebecca Ferguson), plus her former neighbour (Haley Bennett) and the hot shrink (Edgar Ramirez) she may have been having it off with prior to her disappearance. But Blunt is hardly the least plausible

element in Taylor's far-fetched yarn: that honour is shared by Luke Evans, as Bennett's ludicrously buff hubby, and a luridly Guignol climax.

There is, though, polished support to savour from Allison Janney's sceptical cop and Lisa Kudrow as a glamorous New Yorker who's not quite as ghastly as she first appears. **Neil Smith**



### BEN-HUR 12

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OUT NOW DVD, BD, Digital HD

EXTRAS Featurettes, Deleted scenes

**R**emakes aren't always a desperate cash grab: William Wyler's multi-Oscar winner *Ben-Hur* (1959) was itself a remake. But *Ben-Hur* (2016) makes a compelling case for leaving the classics well alone. Jack Huston is horribly miscast as Judah Ben-Hur, a nobleman forced into slavery by his adoptive brother Messala (Toby Kebbell, cartoonishly evil). Timur Bekmambetov brings flair to an impressive shipwreck sequence, but the climactic chariot race is little more than a tedious parade of thundering hooves blighted by incomprehensible editing. **Jordan Farley**



### POPSTAR: NEVER STOP NEVER STOPPING 15

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OUT NOW DVD, BD, Digital HD EXTRAS Commentary, Featurettes, Deleted scenes, Music videos, Gag reel

**C**omedy trio The Lonely Island adapt their musical absurdity to film with this merciless mock-rock-doc that riffs on Justins Bieber and Timberlake (the latter among a long line of in-on-the-joke cameos). Andy Samberg is Conner, a boybander turned spoilt megastar touring his poorly received second album. It takes well-aimed, if crass, pop shots at social-media socialites, but the real joy comes from the songs ('I'm So Humble', 'Things In My Jeep'), each one a bonafide hit in the hilarity stakes. **Matt Looker**



### WAR DOGS 15

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OUT NOW DVD, BD, 4K, Digital HD

EXTRAS Featurettes

**D**espite its charisma-loaded leads and promising non-fiction basis, Todd Phillips' (*The Hangover*) bros-in-arms dramedy could use more fresh satirical ammo. Striking up a crisp chemistry as arms-dealing dudes, Jonah Hill is amoral sleaze incarnate and Miles Teller is a sturdy audience surrogate – the straight man. (Bradley Cooper enjoys a beady-eyed cameo, too.) But as the duo stumble from Miami to Fallujah, their dozy antics don't pack the ethical or comic clout required. This mutt's got more banter than bite. Basic extras. **Kevin Harley**



# the round-up

Cameos, cosiness and really angry computers...



A bus-load of cameos don't add up to a successful spin-off in *Absolutely Fabulous: The Movie* (★★, out now, DVD, BD, Digital), for all the vim Joanna Lumley brings.

If there's life in outer space, it's not found in *Somnus* (★, out now, DVD), a dull drama about a space mission, a malevolent computer and a plan to destroy Earth.

Directed by Steven Shainberg (*Secretary*, *Rapture* (★★, out now, DVD, BD, Digital)) poses a tense question: why has a young woman (Noomi Rapace) been kidnapped? The answer is nonsense.



In Luke 'son of Ridley' Scott's sci-fi horror *Morgan* (★★, out now DVD, BD), Anya Taylor-Joy's synthetic human is creepy, but the film lacks smarts.

Cosy animation *Ethel & Ernest* (★★★, out now, DVD, Digital), is based on *The Snowman*'s Raymond Briggs' graphic-novel tribute to his parents.

Lacking the shock value of the first two, threequel *The Purge: Election Year* (★★, out now, DVD, BD, Digital) suggests the all-crime-legalised-for-one-night conceit has run its course.



## THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN 12

FILM ★★★☆☆ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OUT 23 JANUARY DVD, BD, Digital HD

EXTRAS Featurettes

Antoine Fuqua's remix of John Sturges' epic western makes the classic quiz question – can you name them all? – even harder. Boldly looking beyond the A-list, his casting makes up for the feeling this old-time affair needed more risk. Fuqua shows flair in aping genre icons – even the squib-busters of Leone and Peckinpah – but he's too quick on the draw. Much of the previous *Sevens'* magnificence comes from getting to know them first, but at least Fuqua's impatience makes the most of Denzel Washington and Chris Pratt's charisma. **Simon Kinnear**



## BLAIR WITCH 15

FILM ★★★☆☆ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OUT NOW Digital HD 23 JANUARY

DVD, BD EXTRAS Commentary,

Making Of, Featurette

If you go down to *The Woods* today, you're in for a big surprise. Arriving with a bang after its last-minute name change/reveal, this belated sequel sees James (James Allen McCune), l'il bro of the original's Heather, descend on Burkittsville to unearth what became of his snot-nosed sister. Helmed by Adam Wingard (*You're Next*, *The Guest*), it's a brasher remix of the 1999 classic, with added tech (the drone-cam is wasted), gimmicks (an endless night descends), and glimpses of the source of all the screaming. Effective. Extras include a 103-min(!) Making Of. **Jamie Graham**



## MISS PEREGRINE'S HOME FOR PECULIAR CHILDREN 12

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OUT 6 FEBRUARY DVD, BD, Digital HD

EXTRAS Featurettes, Music video, Gallery

Tim Burton's super-powered fantasy centres on Jake (Asa Butterfield), who discovers Eva Green's secret house for gifted youngsters. With a script by *First Class* scribe Jane Goldman, *X-Men* comparisons are tempting, but reductive: Burton leans more into playful horror territory. If some of the plot's *Groundhog Day*-style convolutions don't stand up to scrutiny, that's easy to forgive with so much inventive monster fun to enjoy. This is Burton back to his most Burton-esque. **Matt Looker**



## BAD MOMS 15

FILM ★★★☆☆ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OUT NOW DVD, BD, Digital HD

EXTRAS Deleted scenes, Gag reel

*The Hangover* writers Jon Lucas and Scott Moore offer up wish-fulfilment for mothers everywhere, starring Mila Kunis as burnt-out mum-of-two Amy, who teams up with the equally stressed Kathryn Hahn and Kristen Bell for some liberating irresponsibility, much to the chagrin of PTA queen Christina Applegate. Hahn gets most of the best moments as an over-the-top man-eater, but the laughs are mostly lowbrow. Inevitably, though, the crudity gives way to the kind of sugary ending that gives mum movies a bad name. **Matt Looker**



## MECHANIC: RESURRECTION 15

FILM ★★★☆☆ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OUT NOW DVD, BD, Digital HD

EXTRAS Featurettes

Five years on from Simon West's *The Mechanic*, Jason Statham's MacGyver-like assassin Arthur Bishop is back for this globe-trotting Dennis Gansel-directed sequel. When an old frenemy (Sam Hazeldine) kidnaps Bishop's new love (Jessica Alba), he's forced to pull off three near-impossible hits to save her. Tommy Lee Jones crops up, complete with Dr. Evil-like lair, but this is largely a functional action-fest, enlivened by one or two outlandish set-pieces. Enjoyable, but no more please. **James Mottram**



## USS INDIANAPOLIS: MEN OF COURAGE 15

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OUT NOW DVD, BD, Digital HD

EXTRAS Making Of

*Titanic* meets *Jaws* was likely the pitch, but Mario Van Peebles' recreation of the titular vessel's sinking by a Japanese sub, with a large chunk of the 1,000 survivors then picked off by sharks, is more *Down Periscope* meets *Shark Night*. The CG predators are fishily realised and Nic Cage somehow manages to out-chomp them even as he plays it taciturn and stoic as the ill-fated Captain McVay. But it's the leaden script that torpedoed the whole thing. Stick to Quint's thrilling monologue in *Jaws*. **Jamie Graham**





## laughter track

A GREAT OUTDOORS MOVIE...

Living the shed-dwelling dream in the Kiwi bush.

# HUNT FOR THE WILDERPEOPLE 12

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OUT NOW DVD, BD, Digital HD EXTRAS Commentary, Making Of, Featurette, Bloopers



**A** naïve youngster with a bearded mentor, on the run in the awe-inspiring New Zealand countryside? Yes, Taika Waititi's Kiwi hit makes an inevitable – if very good – *Lord Of The Rings* gag, but it's very much its own (wilder)beast. An unexpected delight, this fleet-footed character comedy mines rites-of-passage and mismatched-buddy genres in fresh and engaging ways. While those familiar with Waititi's earlier films, such as *Eagle Vs Shark* and *What We Do In The Shadows*, will find enough quality laughs in its goofy, quotable humour, this is richer and more ambitious. It's no mean feat for a film to resemble *Stand By Me* and *Midnight Run*, and bear comparison with both.

Ricky Baker (Julian Dennison) is a 13-year-old lost in the foster system, until he's sent to live with 'Auntie' Bella (Rima Te Wiata) and her grouchy husband, 'Uncle' Hector (Sam Neill). Ricky makes himself at home, but when tragedy strikes and the risk of losing his rural idyll looms, he finds himself on the lam with a reluctant Hec.

What follows is an off-kilter joy, freewheeling between spectacle and subtlety. With its chapter titles and quirky characters (watch out for Rhys Darby as conspiracy theorist Psycho Sam), Waititi's style has obvious debts to Wes Anderson. He also stages action with commendable scale and plenty of flair. With an animal attack to rival

### SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

#### THE KINGS OF SUMMER 2013

A trio of teens build a new life out in the woods.

#### WHAT WE DO IN THE SHADOWS 2014

Another unusual Waititi household: a vampire flat-share.

#### CAPTAIN FANTASTIC 2016

Viggo Mortensen swaps Aragorn for off-the-grid fatherhood.

*The Revenant*, and well-staged nods to *First Blood* and *Thelma And Louise*, Marvel's hiring of Waititi for *Thor: Ragnarok* looks an astute move.

Yet the widescreen framing is designed mostly to let Neill and Dennison spar with each other against that extraordinary NZ environment. Neill confirms what a great actor he is in a role that expresses his remarkable range: part *The Piano*'s misanthropic master, part *Jurassic Park*'s avuncular adventurer. Dennison is a real find, bringing a touching sense of vulnerability and loss alongside pinpoint comic timing.

With these two on the quest, there's enough resonance to outlast the laughter. Like this year's *Captain Fantastic*, it's a story that urges a utopian connection to nature while asking tough questions about the ambivalent benefits of a backwoods upbringing. Mostly, though, it's about being – as Hec puts it – “majestical”, and theirs is a fellowship so engaging it might make you forget about those other fellas wandering through New Zealand. **Simon Kinnear**





ON  
DEMAND



## Z: THE BEGINNING OF EVERYTHING

SHOW ★★★★★

2017 27 JANUARY | AMAZON PRIME

In the few times Zelda Sayre Fitzgerald has been seen on screen, it's been as a glamorously tragic appendage on the arm of her famous writer husband, F. Scott. If the first three episodes are anything to go by, *Z: The Beginning Of Everything* seems intent on righting that injustice by making her not just the heroine of her own story, but a pivotal player in his.

After a grim foreshadowing of the fire that claimed her life in 1948, the pilot quickly establishes Zelda's impulsive nature by showing her stripping naked at 18 to plunge into a lake. With moxie like that, she doesn't take long to catch the eye of *The Great Gatsby* author, then a soldier in a nearby base who dreams of being a writer – provided he can avoid dying in WW1.

### LEGEND OF ZELDA

Christina Ricci gets her jazz on as the wild-living socialite.

Christina Ricci is the main draw here, her apparently ageless genes allowing her to pass (just) as a teenaged wild child always at odds with her stern lawyer father (David Strathairn). Her perkiness and charisma do few favours though to David Hoflin's Scott, a prevaricating dullard with the personality of a pencil sharpener who has the tendency to fade from memory.

Besides Ricci, the show's chief delights are to be found in its vivid evocation of the incipient Jazz Age, something episode three tantalisingly trails by having Zelda leave her stuffy hometown of Montgomery, Alabama for New York. Make way, Big Apple: she's coming through. **Neil Smith**



### BILL & TED'S BOGUS JOURNEY

PG

★★★★★

**NOW** | NETFLIX  
Lesser sequel? No way. "Totally killed" by future-bots, dudes Alex Winter/Keanu Reeves triumph over Death (at Battleship), compliment God and drop gags in barely veiled Ingmar Bergman homages. About bums, mostly.



### DRAG ME TO HELL 15

★★★★★

**NOW** | NETFLIX  
Post-Spidey, Sam Raimi returned to super-nasty pulp form with a horror about an OAP's revenge. He's made serious films, but this has gummy hags, geyser-ing spew and the best stapler gag since *Office Space*, so it's superior.



### UNDER THE SHADOW 15

★★★★★

**NOW** | NETFLIX  
Babak Anvari's Tehran-set horror works by framing old scares in fresh contexts. Missiles, malign djinns and oppressive regimes disturb mum Narges Rashidi's Jane Fonda workout: the mix is so assured, even the bed sheet bit scares.



### ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS PG

★★★★★

**20 JAN** | SKY  
The Hatter's sad-sack backstory is just one unbidden plot-thread in the not over-bidden *Wonderland* sequel. Sacha Baron Cohen steals the lively romp as an embodiment of Time who heals no wounds (not even *Grimmsby*).



### MONEY MONSTER 15

★★★★★

**27 JAN** | SKY  
Jodie Foster's fiscal thriller-com works as a cast-driven lark, if not a satire. George Clooney oozes smarm as a TV host taken hostage by Jack O'Connell's time-bomb; Emily Meade drops quality f-bombs as O'Connell's partner.



### EMBRACE OF THE SERPENT 12

★★★★★

**NOW** | AMAZON  
Hallucinogens and Herzog course through *Ciro Guerra's* epic about Amazonian quests for a sacred plant. A study of exploration and exploitation, its trippy power (almost) makes *Apocalypse Now* look like *Swallows And Amazons*.



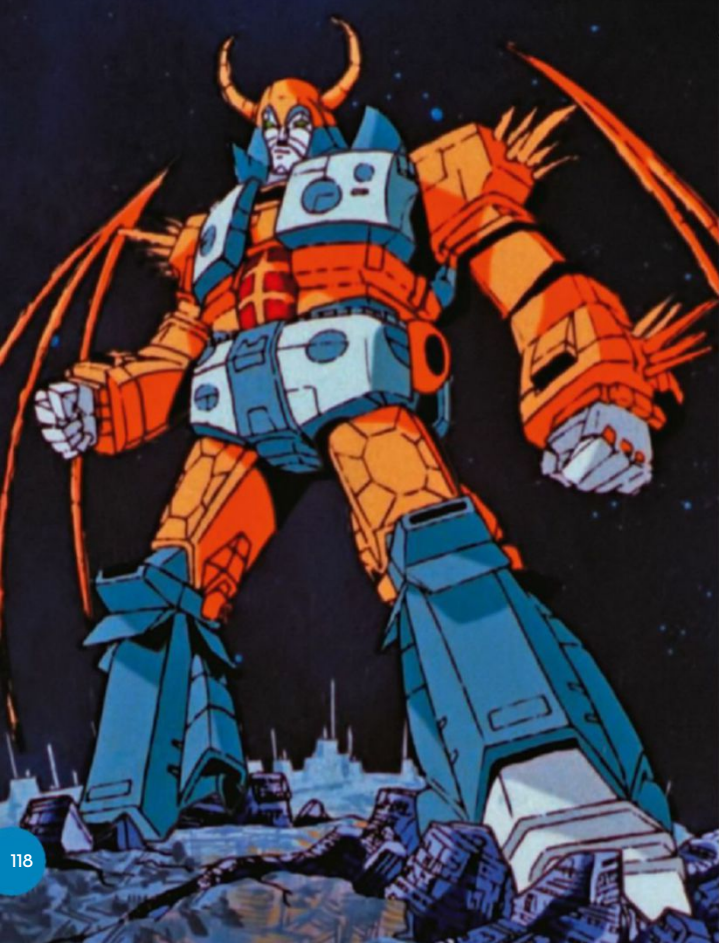
### TED 15

★★★★★

**26 JAN** | AMAZON  
Unless we missed *The Revenant's* rude bits, Seth MacFarlane's stoner-com still owns the 'funniest screen bear' title. Get past Mark Wahlberg's growing pains and its USP is reassuringly pure: more anal gags than you can shake a misused parsnip at.



Orson Welles brings the chaos as Unicron.



**prime mover**  
STILL GOT THE TOUCH...

## THE TRANSFORMERS: THE MOVIE *PG*

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

1986 **OUT NOW** BD Steelbook **EXTRAS** Commentary, Featurettes, Storyboards

**F**orget the wanton carnage of Bay's blockbusters. The best *Transformers* film is this '80s animated effort. Set in futuristic 2005 (!), it sees the Autobots already driven from their home by arch-enemies the Decepticons when a devastating attack on Earth causes them to retreat to the stars as intergalactic refugees. Things get bleaker still when planet-eating super-bot Unicron threatens to destroy them all.

You might expect an adap of a kids' toy line to be disposable froth, but Nelson Shin's film is shockingly dark. Tackling themes such as genocide, it also includes the surprise death of a major character. Upon release this proved too much for some young viewers, leading producer Joe Bacal to rue (wrongly) that "we went too far".

In fact, there's plenty of light to offset the shade. The story rips along, powered by air-punching anthems and

*Rocky IV* composer Vince DiCola's score, while the third act delivers crowd-pleasing catharsis. Factor in the ace ensemble – including Leonard Nimoy and Orson Welles – and, much like the eponymous robots, this is a film in disguise: a solid feat of storytelling masquerading as Saturday morning fizz.

This 30th anniversary 4K Blu-ray packs a clutch of new extras, but fails to port all of the riches from 2007's Ultimate Edition. **Tim Coleman**



### THE BLUE LAMP *PG*

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

1950 **OUT NOW** DVD, BD **EXTRAS** Commentary, Featurette, Galleries

**E**aling's warm tribute to the London bobby, *The Blue Lamp* also offered Dirk Bogarde the chance to escape the bland matinee idol roles he'd been trapped in at Rank. As the young street thug who guns down avuncular PC Dixon (Jack Warner), Bogarde gave notice of far wider potential. The studio's prime scriptwriter, T.E.B. Clarke (himself an ex-copper), paints an affectionate picture of the police, with Warner slotting so snugly into his role that, resurrected, he played Sgt. Dixon in *Dixon Of Dock Green* on TV until well into the '70s. **Philip Kemp**



### LORDS OF DOGTOWN *12*

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

2005 **OUT NOW** BD **EXTRAS** Making Of, Featurettes, Extended/Deleted scenes, Trailers, Interviews

**C**atherine Hardwicke (*Twilight*) gives 2001's definitive skate doc *Dogtown And Z-Boys* the Hollywood treatment, fleshing out the lives of the Venice Beach surfers who adapted their skills to pioneer modern-day skateboarding in the '70s. With the doc's maker (and original Z-Boy) Stacy Peralta on script duty, authenticity's no problem, but the poor-kids-making-it-big arc too often front-sides into cliché. John Robinson, Emile Hirsch and Victor Rasuk each impress, though, as the lead Z-Boys, while Heath Ledger gets his fake teeth into the scenery as Fagan-esque Skip. **Andrew Westbrook**



### DONNIE DARKO *15*

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

2001 **OUT NOW** Dual Format **EXTRAS** Commentaries, Making Of, Featurettes, Deleted scenes, Shorts, Booklet

**I**f the glowing 4K theatrical/director's cut transfers aren't enough, the main reason to revisit Richard Kelly's cosmic head-scratcher is a new 85-minute doc. *Deus Ex Machina* gets detailed with Kelly, DoP Steven Poster, bunny-man James Duval, composer Michael Andrews and others on Jason Schwartzman's involvement, David Hasselhoff's near-involvement, Sam Raimi's set drive-by and more. Also included is the vid for Gary Jules' 'Mad World', which still haunts: like Kelly's sublime film itself. **Kevin Harley**



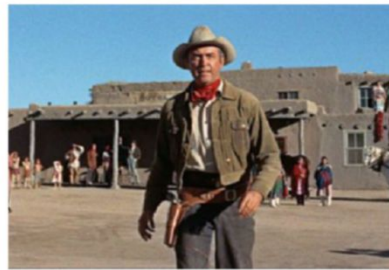


## AKIRA KUROSAWA'S DREAMS PG

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

1990 **OUT NOW** BD **EXTRAS** Commentary, Making Of, Documentary, Interviews, Booklet

**P**eaking with *Ran* in 1985, an ageing Akira Kurosawa fell out of favour in Japan and couldn't get funding for his next film. Turning instead to the young Americans who idolised him, he released *Dreams* in 1990 with assistance from Spielberg, Lucas, Coppola and Scorsese (who plays Vincent van Gogh). Comprising a series of eight magic-realist fairytales, it's intermittently brilliant; some vignettes work better than others but all linger in the subconscious. The UK Criterion edition is predictably impeccable, including a restored transfer and two whopping docs. **Paul Bradshaw**



## THE MAN FROM LARAMIE U

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

1955 **OUT NOW** Dual Format **EXTRAS** Commentary, Interview, Booklet

**T**he last of five westerns James Stewart made with Anthony Mann is also the most ambitious: a Shakespearean thriller of violent revenge, in which Stewart's drifter comes between a cattle baron, his sociopathic son and the hired help. It's a potent allegory of empire-building, set in a bleak landscape of salt lagoons where Mann's choreography of action achieves a heightened symbolism. With Stewart's coiled intensity, it's a key step in the western's journey towards Leone and Peckinpah. **Simon Kinnear**

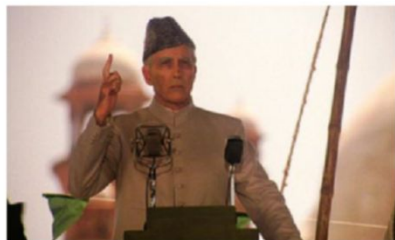


## THE MAN BETWEEN U

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

1953 **OUT NOW** DVD, BD **EXTRAS** Featurette, Interviews

**A** virtual re-run of *The Third Man* from Carol Reed, with Berlin substituting for Vienna and James Mason standing in for Orson Welles, though Graham Greene's scripting and Anton Karas' zither are much missed. Still, Reed vividly captures the sour mood of Cold War Berlin, split in two and scarred from the war. Mason – dodgy German accent apart – is good as the fixer playing off both sides; Claire Bloom is touching as the visiting ingénue who falls for him; and a crack supporting cast add to the sense of guilt-ridden duplicity. **Philip Kemp**



## JINNAH 15

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

1998 **OUT NOW** Dual Format **EXTRAS** None

**I**n what he considered his finest role, Christopher Lee plays Mohammad Ali Jinnah, founder of Pakistan. Single-minded, he's seen tussling with Gandhi, Nehru and the Brit authorities headed by viceroy Lord Mountbatten (James Fox) to achieve his dream of an independent state for India's Muslims. The film hit problems in Pakistan, partly for casting a British actor best known for playing Dracula as their national hero, and partly for taking a not-uncritical view of the man. But that latter point is its strength; and Lee gives a performance of immense stature and dignity. **Philip Kemp**



## THE GUYVER 15

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

1991 **OUT NOW** Dual Format **EXTRAS** Interview, Image gallery, Booklet

**A**n endless title crawl spells out a complicated prologue that returns to the start of time; but long story short, Mark Hamill is a CIA agent who goes after a magic box that turns people into super-powered-alien-gremlin-soldiers. Laying on enough ham and cheese for the pizza nights it seems made for, *The Guyver* is early '90s video-shop sci-fi at its best and worst. Directed by Screaming Mad George and Steve Wang, the guys behind *Predator*'s creature effects, its monsters look amazing. The rest depends on your sense of humour. **Paul Bradshaw**



## DAS CABINET DES DR. CALIGARI

U FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

1920 **OUT NOW** BD Steelbook **EXTRAS** Commentary, Documentaries, Featurettes, Booklet

**I**n small-town Germany, a travelling magician hypnotises his stooge (*Casablanca*'s Conrad Veidt) into carrying out kidnap and murder, in this wildly influential 1920 silent: the modern horror movie properly begins here. Anticipating everything from stalk 'n' slash to the twist-in-the-tale thriller, its crazily angled German Expressionist sets with their painted-on lights and shadows also impacted heavily on a certain Tim Burton. This superb new restoration comes with feature-length documentaries, video essays and an expansive booklet, featuring rare archive stills. **Ali Catterall**





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## SELENE STATUE

COLLECTIBLE **OUT NOW**

**V**ampire Selene returns for more Death Dealing in *Underworld: Blood Wars*. Mark the occasion with this ultra-realistic 1:4 scale sculpted polystone statue from Hollywood Collectibles. It's the first licensed piece to feature the approved likeness of actress Kate Beckinsale. Hand-painted with a limited run of 750 pieces worldwide, she's going to be hard to catch – just ask the Lycans.

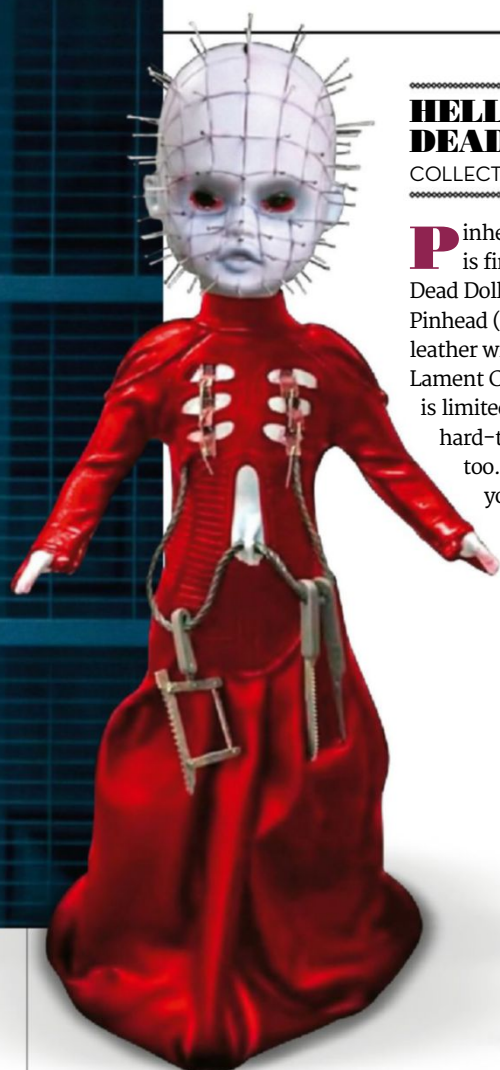
## SUPER MARIO COIN BOX MUG

COLLECTIBLE **OUT NOW**

**I**f you snagged a mini-NES system for Christmas, then you've probably been reconnecting with Mario via some nostalgic late-night gaming sessions. If you're bashing buttons into the wee hours, you'll need a power up – so grab this Super Mario Coin Box mug, which can provide 473ml of whatever caffeine you need to keep trying to rescue the Princess.







## HELLRAISER LIVING DEAD DOLL

COLLECTIBLE **OUT NOW**

**P**inhead worshippers, your creepiest collectible is finally here! The latest entry in the Living Dead Dolls line from Mezco is this 10-inch tall Pinhead (from *Hellraiser III*). Decked out in red leather with nasty accessories including the Lament Configuration, the leader of the Cenobites is limited to 1,500 pieces, and there are some hard-to-find blood-spattered figures out there too. Don't wait until Halloween to upset your friends and family with this winner.



## BACK TO THE FUTURE WALL CHARGER

PHONE CHARGER **OUT NOW**

**H**ow much electricity does it take to charge your smartphone? If you immediately yell "1.21 gigawatts!" then this Flux Capacitor-inspired phone charger is for you. A reproduction of Doc Brown's contraption built to facilitate DeLorean-based time travel, this mini version actually charges two devices at once via USB. You can also make it light up with the flip of a switch. Great Scott!



## DEATH STAR BEAN BAG CHAIR

FURNITURE **OUT NOW**

**F**orget the Rebels bringing down the Death Star; your own personal 'moon' can do the job when you sit on this official *Star Wars* bean bag chair cover. Designed to look like the planet killer, this comfy cover instantly ups the Force (or utter geekiness) in any room. It's 100 per cent polyester for easy cleaning and has a double-locking zipper so there's no leakage. **TB**





There's no spandex in sight for Krysten Ritter's gritty Jones.



## special investigation

AKA MARVEL'S BEST TV SHOW...

### JESSICA JONES: SEASON 1 15

SHOW ★★★★★ EXTRAS TBC

2015 OUT NOW DVD, BD, Digital HD EXTRAS TBC

**A**udiences might have to wait until 2019 for Marvel to give a female superhero a standalone film (Captain Marvel, we're counting on you), but in the meantime, Jessica Jones has been kicking ass on the small screen. Finally hitting disc after making its streaming debut last year, the Netflix show brings a relatively new character – Jones was created by Brian Michael Bendis and Michael Gaydos in 2001 – compellingly to life, in a 13-episode series that's every bit as gritty as forerunner *Daredevil*.

Kicking off with a startling mystery involving runaway teen Hope Shlottman (Erin Moriarty), the series starts with Jones as a private detective, a role she's taken on after a short-lived spell as a superhero. Super-strong, but suffering from PTSD and alcoholism, she wears past anguishes on her sleeve, but that doesn't stop desperate people from seeking her services at her rundown apartment/office. Her first case leads to David Tennant's mind-controlling villain Kilgrave, her abusive ex-boyfriend.

And so begins the darkest MCU story yet, which is saying something given *Daredevil*'s brutal beatings. Much credit is due to star Krysten Ritter for ensuring you always root for Jones, despite her almost constant sullen frown. It's easy to believe she could snap someone twice her size like a twig. With her spandex presumably consigned to the charity bag, her uniform is a black biker jacket and denim jeans. Like *Daredevil*, this is street-level MCU, and all the more rewarding for it.

#### SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

##### THE WIRE

2002-08

David Simon's peerless crime drama explored every corner of its Baltimore milieu.

##### HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE

2005  
David Tennant hints at his bad-guy chops in a memorably sinister cameo.

##### DAREDEVIL: S1

2015  
Establishes the setting, villainy and adult tone of the Netflix shows.

The extra freedom granted by the small screen format allows adult themes to come to the fore; abusive relationships are dealt with both literally and metaphorically, with Kilgrave's controlling powers feeling real-world familiar. Indeed David Tennant is superb as the big bad, casting off his nice-guy persona to ooze a sleazy menace as a genuinely scary villain. It's not all grim though; Luke Cage (Mike Colter) plays a key supporting role (ahead of his own, slightly underwhelming, series), and superpowers are inventively explored in scraps and sex scenes.

It's certainly not perfect – Kilgrave occasionally seems a little *too* powerful, and the season is arguably a little on the baggy side around the middle – but those are minor gripes about a TV show that puts a convincingly noirish spin on a genre that's becoming formulaic on the big screen, and it demands to be binged. If you haven't seen it yet, get on the case before Jones teams up with *Daredevil*, Cage and Iron Fist for this year's *The Defenders*.

**Matt Maytum**



# divine invention

MASTERFUL TV? IS THE POPE CATHOLIC?

## THE YOUNG POPE 15

SHOW ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

2016 **OUT NOW** DVD, BD, Digital HD **EXTRAS** None

**J**ude Law gives a career-best performance as newly elected pontiff Lenny Belardo, aka Pius XIII, a chain-smoking, Cherry Coke Zero-swilling, vain, cunning and fiercely right-wing git/mischief-maker/saint. "I love myself more than I love my neighbour... more than God," he declares, but then he's not certain that God exists.

The above ingredients would be enough to make for a crackerjack show, with our pugnacious Pope navigating the Vatican's murky corridors of power. Just watch as he engages both slyly and directly with scheming puppet master Cardinal Voiello (Silvio Orlando), clashes with his embittered mentor Cardinal Spencer (James Cromwell) and awards a key post to Sister Mary (Diane Keaton), the nun who raised him. They ooze thrills, mystery and intrigue.

But there's more, far more, than cynicism. The divine mixes with the diabolical, the miraculous with the

mendacious – this, like Lars von Trier's *Breaking The Waves*, is a work as devout as it is blasphemous. The style, meanwhile, is all Paolo Sorrentino's own, with the maestro threatening to top his masterpiece *The Great Beauty* as he uncorks a woozy mood-piece comprising untethered camerawork, stunning tableaux, awe-inspiring production design, tip-top acting and a puckish eye for the surreal (nuns playing football, a kangaroo loose in the Vatican's grounds). TV rarely moves in such mysterious ways, and it's exceptional. **Jamie Graham**

Good accessorising is key under God's Law.



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### OUTCAST: S1 18

SHOW ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

2016 **OUT NOW** DVD, BD, Digital HD **EXTRAS** Featurettes, Deleted scenes

**R**obert Kirkman's (*The Walking Dead*) new comic-book adap pits Patrick Fugit as titular outcast Kyle, a survivor of demonic possession who teams up with Philip Glenister's Reverend Anderson to perform exorcisms in a town riddled with demons. It quickly establishes a satisfying arc, with mysterious backstories, supernatural conspiracies and disturbing plot turns fuelling a compelling addition to the exorcism genre, if not an original one. **Matt Looker**



### HUMANS 2.0 15

SHOW ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

2016 **OUT NOW** DVD, Digital HD **EXTRAS** Making Of, Featurette

**A**fter a largely self-contained debut series, Channel 4's "they live among us" techno-parable attempts to up the ante with a robot serial killer, automaton children and a romantic fling for lead 'synth' Mia (Gemma Chan). The problem is there's nowhere for the story to go, a failing that becomes painfully apparent in the episodes during which Mia reverts to being docile help-mate Anita and rebellious sexbot Niska (Emily Berrington) makes yet another improbable escape. Carrie-Anne Moss lends a touch of Hollywood to proceedings as a bereaved mum with plans for her daughter's consciousness, but you suspect, alas, that *Westworld* has stolen *Humans*' thunder. **Neil Smith**



### GIRLS: S5 18

SHOW ★★★★★ EXTRAS TBC

2016 **OUT NOW** DVD, BD, Digital HD **EXTRAS** TBC

**B**ack on form after a lacklustre Season 4 (and mostly back in New York), *Girls*' darker-but-warmer storylines take some admirable risks here – like letting Shoshanna explore if she's big in Japan, and gifting mixed-up Marnie an entire episode of past love that cuts like a knife. Fret not, there's still plenty of millennials-make-a-mess comedy to go round, with Bridezilla Marnie's anxious wedding a particular high point. **Kate Stables**



Jabba's liposuction treatment had some impressive results.

**BOOKS**

## designs of war

THE DROID ART YOU'RE LOOKING FOR

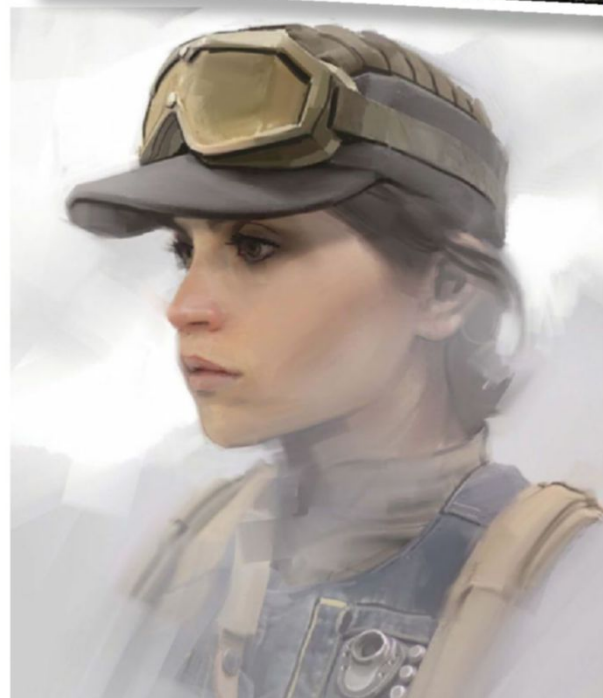
# THE ART OF ROGUE ONE: A STAR WARS STORY

BOOK ★★★★★

JOSH KUSHINS | ABRAMS



**M**ore than 6,000 pieces of concept art were etched and sketched for *Rogue One*. This book, then, represents the tip of the iceberg, but its 300-odd images offer an eye-boggling array of character, environment, vehicle and droid designs. And helmets. Lots of helmets. Though not a *Making Of* as such (don't expect any reshoot tattle), behind-the-scenes tidbits abound, from the original team line-up (more aliens; a more 3PO-like K-2) to Jyn's early backstory (Jedi mum!). The final battle over Scarif gets plenty of double-page loveliness, but as in the film, it's Mr. Vader who steals the show with a stunning section showcasing his fiery lair (or lava's retreat, if you will). Oh, and be sure to peek under the dust cover for another visual treat. *Matthew Leyland*







## GEORGE LUCAS: A LIFE

BOOK ★★★★★

BRIAN JAY JONES | HEADLINE



## THE PRINCESS DIARIST

BOOK ★★★★★

CARRIE FISHER | BANTAM



Think of these volumes as the C-3PO and R2-D2 of *Star Wars*-based books. The first is a hefty 500 pages' worth of facts, figures and second-hand quotes that one could easily imagine emanating from a protocol droid's memory banks. The second is a more playful, meandering read: a "sort of memoir" always on the verge, like R2 in *A New Hope*, often trundling off in any direction it pleases.

Carrie Fisher's *The Princess Diarist* has already generated a gazillion headlines for its revelation that its author had a fling with Harrison Ford while making *Episode IV*. It was a dalliance that seemingly meant more to her than it did to him, and one from which Ford – being 14 years her senior and married at the time – doesn't emerge especially well. Fisher spends a long time analysing 'Carrison',

throwing in 70 pages of recently found diary entries for good measure. As insightful as this is though, you do hanker for more film-focused reminiscence. (*The Empire Strikes Back* doesn't feature, while the only nod to *Episode VI* comes in reference to a Leia waxwork in slave-girl attire.)

Franchise fans, then, are better off with *George Lucas: A Life*, an encyclopedic chronicle of his inexorable rise from day-dreaming teen to game-changing empire builder. Being unauthorised, it's inevitably reliant on pre-existing sources. Yet it still does an impressive job analysing a perplexing talent that, when not rewriting the rulebook on what pictures we see and how we see them, was busy hatching turkeys like *Howard The Duck*. **Neil Smith**



## TIPPI: A MEMOIR

BOOK ★★★★★

TIPPI HEDREN | WILLIAM MORROW

Although Hedren's Hitchcock revelations made headlines, another obsession dominates *The Birds* star's readable but wobbly memoir. Hitchcock emerges as a grotesque stalker, but the lion's share of this otherwise gracious self-portrait is problematic. Between eye-opening anecdotes about *The Exorcist*, plus Melanie Griffith and Don Johnson, she details her obsession with big cats, which risked lives during 1981's *Roar*. Brave or daft? Both, perhaps: and a little wearing, too. **Kevin Harley**

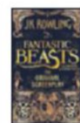


## FILM AND TELEVISION STAR CARS

BOOK ★★★★★

PAUL BRENT ADAMS | AMBERLEY

From Bond cars to Batmobiles, the car really is the star here. As is the spaceship, helicopter, boat... any moving machine, in this exhaustive, if dry, guide to collecting models of the vehicles seen on screen. Adams covers the hobby's history and main model makers, with tips for buying and preservation. But the real joy is poring over the 150-plus pics of weird and wonderful models, all taken from the author's collection. **Andrew Westbrook**



## FANTASTIC BEASTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM: THE ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY

BOOK ★★★★★

J.K. ROWLING | LITTLE BROWN

The bones of a film are never going to be as satisfying as its fully fleshed end product, but J.K.'s first screenplay is interesting nonetheless. The detailed stage directions offer valuable insight, while throwaway jokes also shine in print. Sadly, there's little deleted material; the screenplay essentially matches what's on screen – a missed opportunity. **Stephen Kelly**

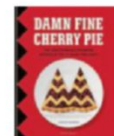
## two more

Comic books and  
cookery books...



### THE DC COMICS ENCYCLOPEDIA

You may need Supes himself to help you heave this beast onto your coffee table, an A-Z of DC characters covering nearly 80 years of comic-book history. It may take you equally long to get through its packed pages, though there's plenty of at-a-glance bits covering the bare essentials, recommended reading and brave attempts to explain ("where practicable") character changes wrought by reboots.



### DAMN FINE CHERRY PIE

Along with all the coffee cocktails and peanut butter and jelly burgers, in this *Twin Peaks*-inspired cookbook, superfan Lindsey Bowden has seasoned her hearty, carby book with everything else you'll need to host the perfect themed dinner party, from diner jukebox selections and fancy-dress ideas to *Twin Peaks* manicure tips and a step-by-step guide to making origami owls.





## play it forward

SMALL SCREEN'S TOP GAMING PICKS FOR 2017...

### NINTENDO SWITCH

OUT MARCH

With the Wii U all but consigned to an awkward footnote in Nintendo's history well before its fifth birthday, its successor has a lot to prove. Happily, this intriguing hybrid device has a killer hook. It's a six-inch tablet that slots neatly into a base unit when you're playing on your TV, but connect the two halves of its controller to the small screen and you've suddenly got a handheld capable of running the same console-quality games on the go. Sold.



### MASS EFFECT ANDROMEDA

OUT MARCH | PC, PS4, Xbox One

Given the vitriolic fan reaction to *Mass Effect 3*'s ending, it's no surprise that Bioware wanted to create some distance between *Andromeda* and the original trilogy – 600 years, to be precise. Humanity is seeking new worlds to colonise, a responsibility that falls on the shoulders of the improbably young and beautiful Scott or Sara Ryder. Whichever sibling you choose, you'll find plenty of potential romantic partners (human or otherwise) to woo in the downtime between blasting alien aggressors and off-roading in a new moon buggy.



### YOOKA-LAYLEE

OUT MARCH | PC, PS4, Wii U, Xbox One

Staffordshire-based studio Playtonic's crowdfunded debut is a breezy, warm-hearted throwback to the heyday of the 3D platform game before everyone bar Nintendo stopped making them. With a torrent of puns, dad jokes and collectibles, it's gleefully old-fashioned in spirit, but benefits from the scope that contemporary hardware can provide. Determined explorers will find its vast worlds can be expanded still further, plus there's a suite of entertainingly knockabout multiplayer activities. Could these plucky Brits beat Nintendo at its own game?



### UNCHARTED: THE LOST LEGACY

OUT TBC | PS4

Now Nathan Drake has retired from stealing ancient artefacts, it's time for new antiheroes to pick up the baton. *The Lost Legacy* is a standalone episode set after the events of *A Thief's End*, starring Chloe Frazer (one part of *Uncharted 2*'s love triangle) and Nadine Ross (*Uncharted 4*'s underwritten mercenary) who are – surprise! – trying to secure a priceless treasure, this time in a war-ravaged Indian city. After the sausage fest of the four main games, it's heartening to see the female support promoted to centre stage.





## DEATH STRANDING

OUT TBC | PS4

Auteur designer Hideo Kojima celebrates his release from publisher Konami by re-teaming with *The Walking Dead*'s Norman Reedus and Guillermo del Toro (both of whom were attached to Kojima's cancelled horror game *Silent Hills*) for what he's calling a 'quasi-action game'. Two enigmatic teasers have already thrown up some seriously twisted imagery – not least del Toro carrying a winking baby inside a synthetic womb – while Mads Mikkelsen follows up *Doctor Strange* by playing another antagonist with dodgy eye make-up. The talent alone makes this one to watch.



## RESIDENT EVIL 7: BIOHAZARD

OUT 24 JANUARY | PC, PS4, Xbox One

A fresh start for gaming's most enduring horror series, as Capcom trades schlocky third-person action for a gruelling first-person adventure. There are shades of *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* as Ethan, a man searching for his missing wife, stumbles across a dilapidated Louisiana mansion owned by the Bakers, a psychotic family who make Leatherface look friendly. It lets the tension build to nerve-shredding levels, before exploding into sweaty, panicked close-quarters combat – and it's playable in VR, too, if you don't fancy sleeping ever again...



## HORIZON ZERO DAWN

OUT 3 MARCH | PS4

For sheer blockbuster spectacle, Guerrilla Games' post-apocalyptic adventure is the game to beat, though it has more than just jaw-slackening looks in its quiver. The daily battles faced by hunter Aloy against the robotic creatures that now roam the world are thrillingly mounted, requiring both a steady aim and a willingness to improvise as you work to target the weaknesses of these imposing mechanical beasts. Scrap from those you destroy can be harvested for currency, while others can be hacked and turned into pets.



## NIOH

OUT 8 FEBRUARY | PS4

An unfinished Kurosawa script was the inspiration for this brutally tough role-playing game, based loosely on the legend of William Adams, the first western samurai. It's been in development for well over a decade, though work only began in earnest when the reins were handed to action expert dev Team Ninja (*Ninja Gaiden*, *Dead Or Alive*) four years ago. Borrowing liberally off From Software's critically adored *Souls* series, its unorthodox rhythms and demanding combat may not be to all tastes, but following an early beta test, it's already attracted a devoted following.



## SOUTH PARK: THE FRACTURED BUT WHOLE

OUT TBC | PC, PS4, Xbox One

Designed to cause maximum embarrassment when requested in game stores (retailer unease forced a name change from *Butthole Of Time*), this follow-up to 2014's *The Stick Of Truth* promises to be much more than an extended episode of the potty-mouthed 'toon. This time, Trey Parker and Matt Stone's satirical sights are trained on the Marvel universe: the plot sees the South Park kids split into two factions of superheroes, and as the new kid in town, you're forced to pick a side as the schism erupts.



## THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: BREATH OF THE WILD

OUT TBC | Wii U, Switch

With apologies to a certain plumber, this is the Nintendo game we're most looking forward to this year. Wild steps away from the handholding of recent entries, it harks back to the series' origins by simply presenting you with an expansive world and letting you get on with exploring it. Elsewhere, it offers a whimsical take on the crafting systems of its contemporaries, and while its painterly looks bear comparison with 2011's *Skyward Sword*, its soundtrack is straight out of a Ghibli animation. **Chris Schilling**



## fresh spins

TF scores the latest soundtracks...



### LA LA LAND

After *Whiplash*, composer Justin Hurwitz maxes the dream-factory pep for Damien Chazelle's dazzling musical. Loved-up romanticism rules: pianos twirl, bass lines bump, woodwinds flutter and Ryan Gosling/Emma Stone's Broadway-bright voices illuminate 'City Of Stars' and 'Someone In The Crowd'. Stone's 'Audition', meanwhile, adds deepening notes of yearning. La la lovely.



### JACKIE

Pop experimentalist Mica Levi follows her freaky *Under The Skin* score by delving under a grieving Jackie Kennedy's skin. If the blankets of cello/violin and ambient main motif suggest surface poise, the sliding glissandos plumb hidden pains. Between those extremes, 'Tears' and 'Graveyard' mount minutely detailed studies in contained expression: every subtle tonal shift registers hauntingly.

## CLASSIC SOUNDTRACK



## saturday night fever

VARIOUS / WARNER

**W**hether you're a brother or whether you're a mother, you've probably busted some ropey moves to *Saturday Night Fever's* songs at some family function or other. The conclusion is clear: the Bee Gees-dominated soundtrack for John Travolta's 1977 hit is more than a soundtrack. It's an era, its dancefloors distilled and crystallised for future generations to revisit at a needle's drop.

The Bee Gees had seemed stuck in the mid-'70s, dismissed as '60s has-beens. Yet if the dancefloor saved them, they saved a film in return. Travolta recalls dancing to tracks by "Stevie Wonder and Boz Scaggs" early in the making of the movie, originally titled *Tribal Rites On A Saturday Night*. But producer Robert Stigwood had faith in the brothers Gibb, who wrote him five songs in a weekend. Speaking to *Vanity Fair*, a camera operator recalled the tracks' galvanising effect. "We all thought we'd fallen into a bucket of shit, and then we heard that music," said Tom Priestley.

The soundtrack had doubters; rock-ist dolts who voiced appalling

(racist, homophobic...) "disco sucks" complaints. Accusations of a straight, white dilution of disco's black, gay roots also dogged the album, though it wasn't all Bee Gees. A spread of disco basics featured, from Kool & The Gang's funky frolic 'Open Sesame' to The Trammps' roof-raiser 'Disco Inferno'.

Novelty cuts appear too, among them David Shire's 'Salsation' and Walter Murphy's 'A Fifth Of Beethoven'. But the Bee Gees' hits are indelible: satirists would later snigger at their man-fur chests and tight-squeezed falsettos, but the string-soaked dancefloor pleasures of 'Stayin' Alive' and the title track are touched by precision pop genius. And

they're matched in elastic-limbed vim by 'Jive Talkin'' and 'You Should Be Dancing', dusted-down hits from 1975/6, originally released by Stigwood.

Lush lows also feature, mirroring clubbing's euphoric ups and melancholy comedowns. From its minor-key strings and wave-crash guitars to its woebegone lyrics and forthright vocal (from Yvonne Elliman), 'If I Can't Have You' revels in ecstatic misery. 'How Deep Is Your Love' drips with melodramatic solipsism. Even the indefatigable-sounding 'Stayin' Alive' plays off terrific tensions between forward motion and frustration, strut and stasis – "Life goin' nowhere, somebody help me...".

The Bee Gees were going somewhere: the record books, with the best-selling soundtrack album ever until 1992's *The Bodyguard*. Still in second place on its 40th anniversary needs celebrating. You should be dancing. **Kevin Harley**

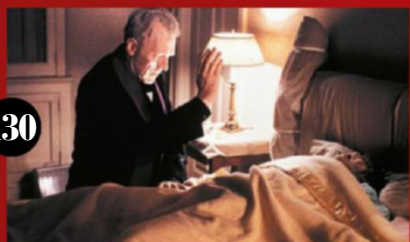


EDITED BY JANE CROWTHER

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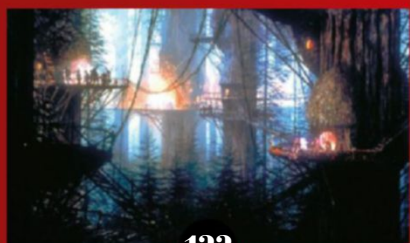
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132



133



134



136



143



144



146



# TOTAL FILM BUFF

CINEMA CELEBRATED  
AND DEBATED. BOOSTING  
YOUR MOVIE GENIUS  
TO SUPERHERO  
LEVELS...

this  
issue

AQUA ACROBATICS  
WATCH YOUR STEP  
AWARD ABOMINATION

X-TRA HELP  
LIGGING LEO  
DIRTY MOVIES

CHOOSE LIFE  
YUB NUB!  
FANTASTIC OR BEASTLY?



## INVESTIGATION

# IS IT BOLLOCKS?

Film Buff investigates the facts behind outlandish movie plots.

THIS MONTH **DRUNKEN IMPROMPTU FREEDIVING IN POINT BREAK**



Q

In 2015's remake, a boozed-up Johnny Utah dives off a party boat for a spot of spontaneous nighttime freediving... with no training or preparation. Possible?

A

IAN DONALD

AIDER, INSTRUCTOR AND DIRECTOR OF FREEDIVEUK.COM

If we forget they're clearly in a different dive site in each shot and accept that this is one long dive, these two jump in, are under for over a minute, do some weight diving with a rock and swim to depths of 10-20 metres without masks or fins. A pro freediver would find that challenging but it'd be dangerous for a pair of novices who'd been drinking (which changes the way your heart pumps and oxygen bonds). You wouldn't jump in because the rush would elevate your heart rate; you'd be on the surface for at least two minutes. Two people wouldn't dive together. One would stay at the surface because the last few metres of an ascent is when you're most likely to black out. The reality would be they'd jump in, dive to the bottom, not be able to see each other without masks, come back up and black out. At no point do they equalise [*pop their ears*], so they're diving 'hands free', a really advanced technique. For a pro with proper planning, that dive would be beautiful, but not if you're two drunk people splashing about in the dark.

**VERDICT BOLLOCKS**

## ALTERNATIVE BOX OFFICE

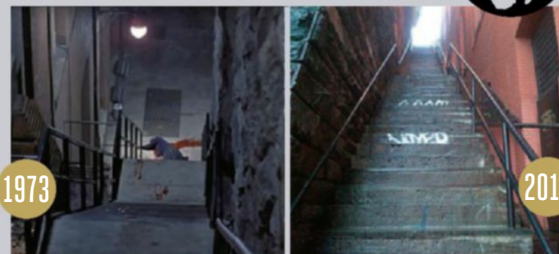
THE BIGGEST BLOCKBUSTER MOVIES...  
WITH 0% ON ROTTEN TOMATOES



|    |                                                 |         |
|----|-------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 1  | Staying Alive 1983                              | \$64.9M |
| 2  | Police Academy 4: Citizens On Patrol 1987       | \$28.1M |
| 3  | Jaws: The Revenge 1987                          | \$20.8M |
| 4  | Police Academy 5: Assignment Miami Beach 1988   | \$19.5M |
| 5  | The Neverending Story II: The Next Chapter 1990 | \$17.4M |
| 6  | Ballistic: Ecks Vs. Sever 2002                  | \$14.3M |
| 7  | Police Academy 6: City Under Siege 1989         | \$11.6M |
| 8  | American Ninja 1985                             | \$10.5M |
| 9  | Look Who's Talking Now! 1993                    | \$10.3M |
| 10 | Superbabies: Baby Geniuses 2 2004               | \$9.2M  |

## ON LOCATION

REEL SPOTS BEHIND THE CAMERA



**WHAT?** Finding Father Merrin expired, *The Exorcist's* Father Karras demands the demon invade his body, and when it does, he throws himself from Regan's window to his death down the steep stone steps outside.

**WHERE?** The corner of Prospect Street NW and 36th Street NW in Georgetown, Washington, DC.

**GO?** The 75 stone steps remain exactly as they were when stuntman Chuck Waters tumbled down them twice during filming. Ominous and creepy, visitors enjoy sprawling at the bottom for photos while locals use them for a workout. *Thanks to Henry Johns.*

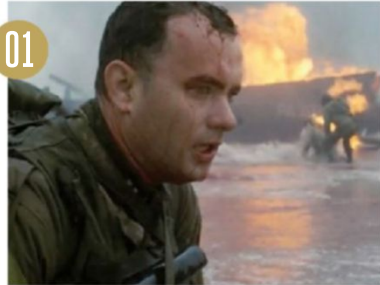
Snapped yourself at a film location? Send us the details at [totalfilm@futurenet.com](mailto:totalfilm@futurenet.com)



TOP 10

# OSCAR BLUNDERS

The most outrageous Academy omissions...



01

## SAVING PRIVATE RYAN

Yes, the WW2 epic, with its masterful D-Day scene, did collect five Oscars, including for director/DP double-act Steven Spielberg/Janusz Kaminski, but it lost out on 1999's Best Picture to the more populist *Shakespeare In Love*.



02

## BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN

Ang Lee's taboo-smashing gay cowboy romance had seemed a shoo-in for Best Picture at 2006's awards, only to be pipped by *Crash*. So big was the upset that allegations of bigotry among the Academy electorate unsurprisingly followed.

## STANLEY KUBRICK

The iconic auteur behind all-time greats such as *Dr. Strangelove* made the shortlist for producing, directing or writing a total of 12 times, but won none of them. His solitary statue came in 1969, for Visual Effects, on 2001: A Space Odyssey.



03

## CITIZEN KANE

It's regularly named the greatest-ever film, and is the best-known work of Orson Welles (another titan to never win Best Director), but it only converted one of its nine noms, for Best Writing (Welles). Collecting 1942's Best Picture was *How Green Was My Valley*.



04



05

## SIDNEY POITIER

The trailblazing African American had already won Best Actor for *Lilies Of The Field*, but perhaps the Academy felt one was enough. In *The Heat Of The Night* picked up five Oscars in 1968, including Best Actor for Rod Steiger, while top-billed Poitier wasn't even nominated.



06

## DAVID OYELOWO

In 2016, with only white actors being recognised for a second year running, the #OscarsSoWhite campaign really hit home. But the momentum had begun in 2015, when Oyelowo's lauded turn as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in *Selma* didn't even earn a nom.

## MARTIN SCORSESE

An oft-repeated Academy habit is celebrating an artist's lesser work having earlier shunned their best. Exhibit A: Marty Scorsese. *Raging Bull*? Nope. *Goodfellas*? Nah. *Infernal Affairs* remake *The Departed*? Hell yeah! Fine film, but 2007's best?



07

## ALFRED HITCHCOCK

He may have been the 'Master of Suspense', but Hitchcock was another historic helmer to never win Best Director. Nominated five times (but not for *Vertigo*), he had to make do with the Irving G. Thalberg Memorial Award in 1968. Pfft.



08



09

## LA CONFIDENTIAL

Curtis Hanson's multi-layered noir classic did collect a pair of gongs, for Best Writing and Supporting Actress (Kim Basinger), but it failed to convert its seven other noms, including the big one. The problem? It was 1998, the year *Titanic* sunk all in its sight.



10

## DENZEL WASHINGTON

Already a winner for *Glory*, Washington, at his electrifying best in *Malcolm X*, looked set to make it two in 1993. But the late rewards scheme again kicked in. Al Pacino, nominated for an eighth time, won his only Oscar for *Scent Of A Woman*. **AW**



## TOTAL FILM'S CONFESSIONS

DIRTY LITTLE SECRETS  
OF THE TF TEAM.

**THIS MONTH... MOMENTS THAT  
FIRST MADE US 'FEEL FUNNY'**

TRAIN SEX *Risky Business* (1983)  
WATER BED FOREPLAY  
The Woman In Red (1984)  
JULIE AND DONALD GOING FOR IT  
Don't Look Now (1973)  
SARAH MILES AND A SOLDIER'S  
FOREST SHAG *Ryan's Daughter* (1970)  
THE INK & PAINT CLUB  
Who Framed Roger Rabbit (1988)  
JAMIE LEE CURTIS' STRIPTEASE  
True Lies (1994)  
CAMERON DIAZ'S RED-DRESSED  
ENTRY *The Mask* (1994)

### HINDSIGHT CORNER!

*Stars eat their words...*



#### CASEY AFFLECK THE FINEST HOURS (2016)

**JANUARY 2016** "The scale of it is fantastic... what they can do nowadays visually, digitally, it all looks very real... it's amazing."

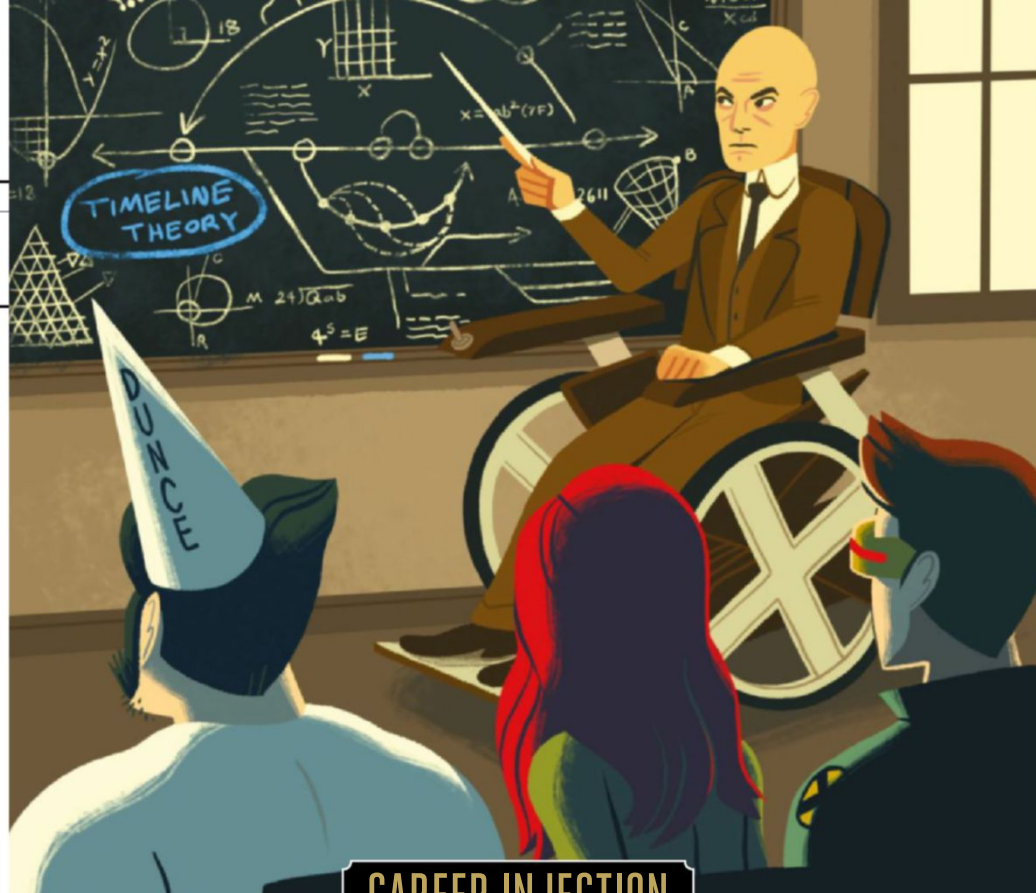
**SEPTEMBER 2016** "I showed it to [my kids]. I was like, 'Finally, they're going to see Dad as a hero.' They were like, 'This sucks.' They hated it. They were so bored. One of them left. I'm never doing that again."

### PLAIN TALKING

*Learn the movie lingo*

#### THIS MONTH: GRAND GUIGNOL

Originally a Parisian theatre specialising in horror shows that caused patrons to faint from the gore, the term has come to mean heightened horror in the (open) vein of Roger Corman and Dario Argento. It also spawned sub-genre Grande Dame Guignol, horror featuring older actresses (such as *What Ever Happened To Baby Jane?*).



## CAREER INJECTION

# X-MEN

The X-Men's tangled timelines need serious fixing.  
Is a soft reset the way to go?

**A**nd when the forest would grow rank and needed clearing for new growth," boomed Oscar Isaac in *X-Men: Apocalypse*, giving Ra's al Ghul a run for his monologues, "I was there to set it ablaze." Is a full clearing of the X-Men's branches due? We'll say this: some judicious pruning wouldn't hurt.

The reasons why are many, but the wobbly performance of *Apocalypse* is one. True, a \$543.9m haul is no flop. But it sits below *Days Of Future Past*'s \$747.9m and *Deadpool*'s \$782.6m, which stings: a spin-off shouldn't score higher than the mothership, and that mothership may have looked unduly solemn and speech-y after *Deadpool*'s fripperies. And the reviews? Ouch: 48 per cent on Rotten Tomatoes.

Casting issues might also require resets. The *First Class* stars have completed three-film contracts – and Jennifer Lawrence, James McAvoy and Michael Fassbender are hardly work-starved. As for the old crew, Hugh Jackman leaves with *Logan*, with Patrick Stewart's Prof. X also looking peaky in the trailer – though X's previous deaths open cans of continuity worms. The series' timey-wimey tangles have become messy:

messier, even, than off-screen burps related to long-mooted spin-off *Gambit* (directors' musical chairs) and *Deadpool 2* (departing director/composer).

So, what to make of the four unnamed Fox/Marvel dates up for release in 2018/19? One is, surely, *Deadpool 2*. We've been waiting too long to gamble on *Gambit*, despite producer Simon Kinberg's claim to have "a great script". *New Mutants* is, apparently, ready for Josh Boone (*The Fault In Our Stars*) to direct. And a script exists for *X-Force*: but would Cable need disentangling from *Deadpool 2*?

Further rumours/teases dangle. Will future films feature Mr. Sinister, X-23/Laura Kinney or Dark Phoenix? Who knows, but we will see two TV spin-offs, *Legion* and an unnamed one.

At which point, our aching heads crave some certainties. We want to see the series refreshed with tonal risks – in *Deadpool*'s spirit, if not necessarily its style – but the air needs clearing of continuity farts first and *Apocalypse*'s newbies (Sophie Turner, Tye Sheridan) shouldn't be lost. Nor should the comics' material. Possible storylines include Proteus, Breakworld, Broodfall... After *Apocalypse*, the scope to build new worlds could be huge. **KH**

## FIVE POINT FIX

**1** Get the *First Class* crew back #onelasstime. They deserve a stronger end than *Apocalypse*.

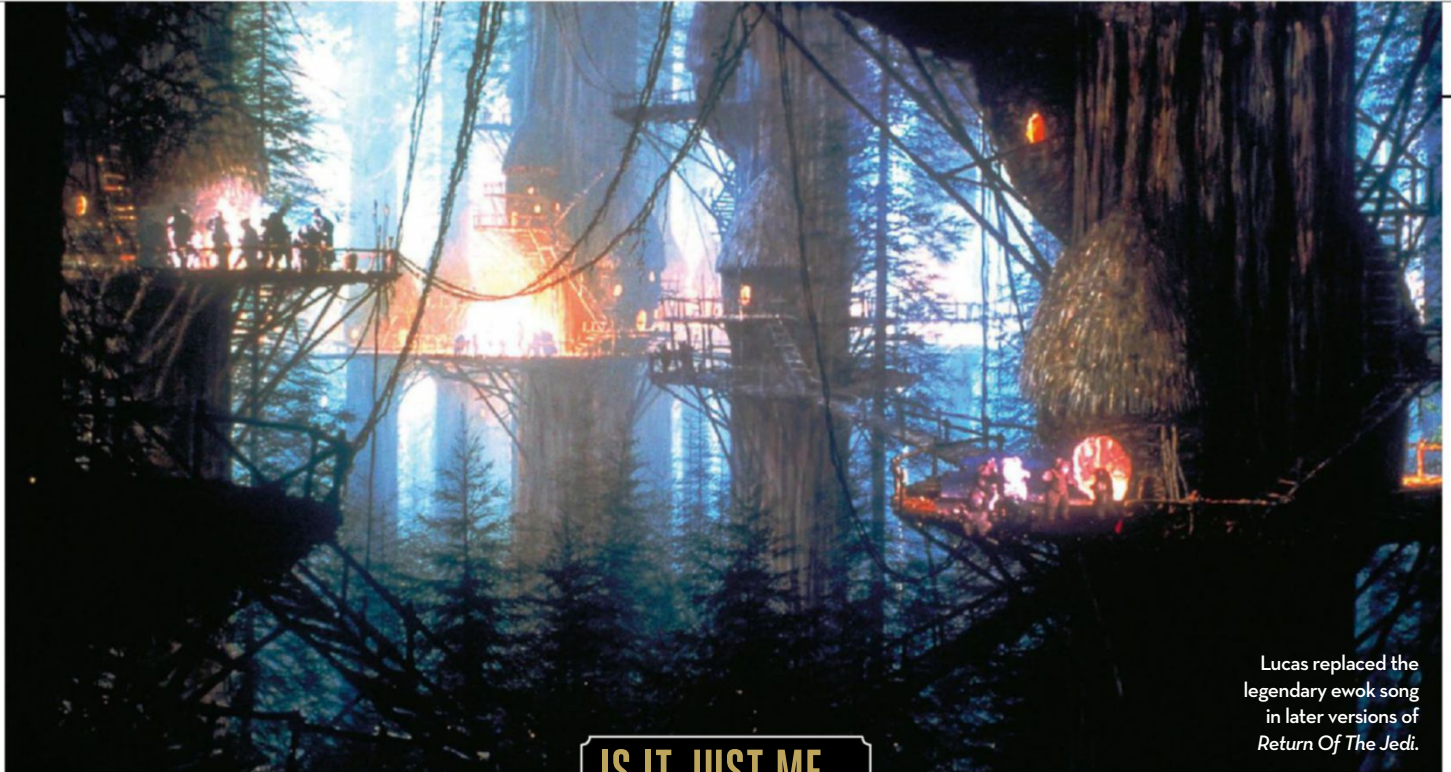
**2** Try clarity. We'd be impressed if the timelines were resolved. And our heads would hurt less.

**3** If Bryan Singer is leaving Cerebro, employ *Dredd* writer/Ex *Machina* director Alex Garland's services.

**4** Give Sophie Turner the Dark Phoenix arc. After Sansa Stark's TV evolution, she could nail it.

**5** Explore the comics. (Re-)Start with Grant Morrison's bonkers 'E Is For Extinction', or the *Astonishing* run: that Joss Whedon, he's good...





Lucas replaced the legendary ewok song in later versions of *Return Of The Jedi*.

## IS IT JUST ME...

# OR WAS GEORGE LUCAS RIGHT TO DELETE THE EWOK SONG?

asks Jordan Farley

**C**onventional wisdom would have it that the 1997 *Star Wars* Special Editions are abominations. Patchwork monstrosities that add a render farm's worth of ropery CGI, unnecessary extra dialogue and the indescribably rubbish 'Jedi Rocks' musical number.

But there is one major change Lucas got right when 'correcting' the perceived ills of his galactic trilogy: replacing the original 'Ewok Celebration' – the track that closes out *Return Of The Jedi* – with the vastly superior 'Victory Celebration'.

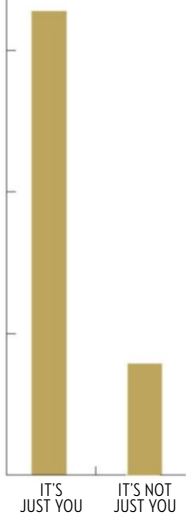
Stick that in your Yub Nub and smoke it. While we can all surely agree that swapping out the dignified Force ghost of Sebastian Shaw for Hayden Christensen's petulant man-baby Anakin in the 2004 DVD release was a crime against common sense, I'd argue

that John Williams' aural improvements are equally incontestable. His '97 composition is a more fitting climax to Luke Skywalker's journey from whiny farmboy to Empire-toppling Jedi Knight. The 'Victory Celebration' has a grandeur that better reflects the Rebel Alliance's achievements, while never forgetting it's being performed by a tribe of tree-hugging teddy bears.

Crucially, it's also a track that's laced with melancholy. There's a poignancy to those slightly-cheesy-on-first-listen flutes that perfectly captures the sense of loss, sacrifice and suffering that the victory necessitated, while feeling upbeat enough to leave a note of hope for the future.

The 'Ewok Celebration', or 'Yub Nub Song', as it's affectionately known, is more triumphant in comparison,

### OFFICE-OMETER THE TF STAFF VERDICT IS IN!



but to a simplistic degree. I understand the logic – it's being performed by a few ewoks on Endor, not a 200-piece orchestra – but after three films it sounds too muted and anti-climactic to my ear. It's also extremely silly, which may seem a preposterous thing to say about a children's film, but the nonsensical lyrics add nothing. "Celebrate the love" are the soppiest words in the *Star Wars* canon until *Episode II*'s "I don't like sand".

It's not that I dislike Yub Nub. I still smile whenever I hear it, and the very idea of Lucas having tinkered with *Star Wars* at all remains a thorny issue. But there's no doubt in my mind he made the right call commissioning a new musical ending for *Jedi*. Or is it just me? **Share your reaction at [www.gamesradar.com/totalfilm](http://www.gamesradar.com/totalfilm) or on Facebook and Twitter.**

## LAST MONTH IS AN UNEXPECTED JOURNEY THE BEST MIDDLE-EARTH FILM?

### NICK WHITELAW-BOLTON

What? Not a chance! The *LOTR* movies were awesome but the *Hobbit* movies were a crushing disappointment for me.

### SAMUEL DAVIS

Will forever defend the first two *Hobbit* films. Prefer the entire trilogy to original *LOTR*. I prefer the tone, characters and the cartoon logic suits.

### TIM HOWICK

The *Hobbit* trilogy is utter shite compared to the *Lord Of The Rings* trilogy. It happens when you rush a script to keep a cash cow going.

### MATTHEW SALERNO

WTF? The *Hobbits* were the most forgettable pieces of crap ever.

This is *The Phantom Menace* of *LOTR*.

### STUART BAKER

The *Hobbit* is to *LOTR* what the prequels are to *Star Wars*.





THE BIG SHOT

# MAKING AN ENTRANCE IN CATCH ME IF YOU CAN

**G**liding from a limousine and towards a sun-drenched Miami International Airport amid a throng of beautiful, beaming air hostesses, *Catch Me If You Can*'s airport scene shows Leonardo DiCaprio's Frank Abagnale Jr. at his most brazen, the '60s backdrop at its most glamorous.

As the giddy chorus line of Pan Am attendants flows the fraudster past his hapless FBI hunters, to the croons of Frank Sinatra's 'Come Fly With Me', all while drawing enchanted gawps and hat tips, the walk joyfully captures both the playful tone of Steven Spielberg's truth-based tale, plus the stylish allure of Abagnale's high-flying exploits.

Shooting the 2002 crime caper in just 46 days with Panavision cameras and Zeiss lenses, Spielberg considered light and colour critical. He again teamed up with double-Oscar-winning cinematographer Janusz Kaminski, his go-to DP since 1993's *Schindler's List*.

"I said to Janusz," Spielberg told *IGN*, "'We've done all these dark, backlit, contrasty movies. Let's put lights right in people's faces. Let's make this whole era blossom the way I remember it.'"

Kaminski duly obliged. "It was like champagne coming out of the bottle, with bubbles and warmth," he told *Vulture*. That luxurious sense of the period was achieved most palpably with Abagnale's ballsy airport escape, shot outside Terminal 1 of Ontario Airport, a Hollywood location regular about 40 miles east of LA.

Inspired by '60s photoshoots idealising flight crews in magazines

such as *Life* ("The pilots were the stars, they were gigolos"), Kaminski concentrated his efforts on the lighting. "I have huge lights right in front of the actors," he said. "Because otherwise they would just be silhouetted against the sky. That's what gives you that glossy feeling. You've got that beautiful front light with a backlight behind them, and Leo looks very jovial and the girls are beautiful."

The idea of having DiCaprio surrounded by a phalanx of attendants, however, came from the teenage cheque forger himself, courtesy of Abagnale's semi-autobiographical book of the same name. While the pretend pilot never used the tactic to sneak past specific agents, he did go to a school and hire eight stewardesses to join him on a three-month 'promotional tour', explaining in his 1980 book how he picked women who were "easygoing, somewhat gullible, a little daring or devil-may-care".

"An entourage is expected of some people," he continued. "A pilot trailing a squad of lovely stewardesses would almost certainly be above suspicion." Indeed, as Kaminski's masterful lighting showed, hiding in plain sight can be easy with the help of a little glamour. **AW**











**FILM  
BUFF**

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# HOT FUZZ

To celebrate the Brit action-comedy turning 10 years old, Total Film rides shotgun with Edgar Wright, Simon Pegg and Nick Frost as they rev up the memories of making an arresting classic.

WORDS JAMIE GRAHAM

ALLSTAR



## TF CLASSIC

**A**pril, 2006. It's deep into the 11-week shoot of *Hot Fuzz* in writer/director Edgar Wright's hometown of Wells, Somerset, and he's standing in the high street between set-ups, about to sign a DVD of his feature debut *Shaun Of The Dead*. It's a snapshot moment, the 31-year-old filmmaker surrounded by starry cast and sizeable crew, in the midst of orchestrating an explosive set-piece in a \$12m action-comedy that bursts with killer quips, impressive SFX and guns. Lots of guns. And here stands a kid with a marker pen and a copy of *Shaun*, the 2004 zomromcom that's already entered the cultural consciousness and seen Wright hailed by such icons as Stephen King, George Romero and Quentin Tarantino.

"I'm about to sign it when this woman, who shall remain nameless, comes around the corner pushing a pram," recalls Wright, a grin spreading across his face as he puts down his double espresso in a London coffee shop. It's December 2016, and in 10 weeks' time *Hot Fuzz* will celebrate its 10th birthday. "I had a crush on her [as a teenager] and I actually got off with her at a party once," he continues, the grin growing wider. "Cut to 13 years later, and just as I was about to put Sharpie to DVD, she goes, 'No Edgar Wright, I don't want your autograph,' and walks off!"

Whether said woman likes, or has even seen, *Hot Fuzz* remains a mystery. What we do know is that this middle chapter of Wright's Three Flavours Cornetto Trilogy (bracketed by *Shaun* and 2013's *The World's End*) is his biggest hit to date: \$80.6m at the worldwide box office, and with the DVD residing in one in seven UK homes.

Like albums, sophomore movies are notoriously tricky, your big idea spent, your creative timeframe collapsed and your shoulders buckling under the

pressure to match your attention-grabbing debut. Wright, however, already had the answer.

"As a teenager I made comedies because nobody would take anything set in Somerset seriously," he says. "And one of the movies I made, in '92 or '93, when I was 18, was called *Dead Right*, and it was basically *Dirty Harry* in my school and hometown. It's completely stupid, but there was the germ of doing a West Country cop film. After *Shaun Of The Dead*, I thought it would be funny to take the Michael Bay/Tony Scott approach to action and put it in a rural setting. Simon, initially, was not on board. He was like, 'But we can do anything. We can make a fantasy movie, or something in space... Why do we want to do a cop movie?'"

### BRING TO BOOK

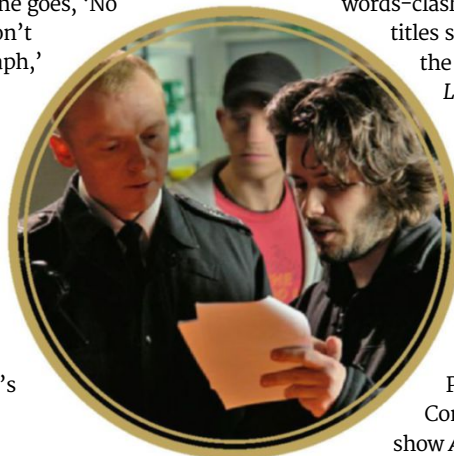
Pegg laughs at the memory. Home with his family for Christmas, he's evidently in generous spirit, admitting there was more to it. "*Shaun Of The Dead* we concocted together, whereas *Hot Fuzz* was Edgar's idea," he says. "I felt, 'Maybe we should have another idea together'. But I didn't have a better one..." He did, however, insist that Wright change the title from 'Hott Fuzz' to *Hot Fuzz*, maintaining the play on the two-dangerous-sounding-

words-clashed-together titles so favoured by the genre (*Point Break*, *Lethal Weapon*) but simplifying the gag.

Old chums from not just *Shaun* but also Channel 4 sitcom *Spaced* (1999-2001) and six-part

Paramount Comedy Channel show *Asylum* (1996),

Wright and Pegg's work rhythms are in sync, and together they researched *Hot Fuzz* rigorously. Watching endless cop and action movies until, as Wright puts it, "the clichés just poured out by osmosis", was the easy part. The real legwork was interviewing cops from north London and Brixton before touring







Wright was driven by the idea of doing a Tony Scott-style action film in the English countryside.



police stations in Somerset and Wiltshire to get the rural take.

"A lot of the sillier stuff in the movie came directly from that," Wright explains. "They were real police anecdotes: the escaped swan, the idea of all farmers having guns, and all the PC stuff about changing terminology." Pegg agrees, adding: "We heard some crazy stories: people chasing heroin addicts on tractors; the farmer they couldn't understand. I really felt a part of the process once we'd done that research. I thought,

'Oh yeah, this is going to be fun to write.'"

Fun, but also arduous.

The script took 18 months to complete, with promotional duties for *Shaun* devouring Wright and Pegg's schedules. When they could find time to focus, they convened at an office in Great Titchfield Street in central London, and wrote as they always do, with one doing the finger work and the other pacing the room, then switching over. There were flip charts and index cards, and slowly the swirl of amorphous ideas solidified into scenes that were then filled with dialogue and honed until, says Pegg, his tongue tickling his cheek, "the big chunk of rock was sculpted into a beautiful film".

At which point fellow *Shaun* and *Spaced* alumnus Nick Frost entered the frame. "I usually get it after they've had a first go at it, then I'll have a go through and give them... not notes, but thoughts," he explains, on the phone from Dublin where he's shooting Sky Atlantic comedy series *Sick Note*. "My ideas are either incorporated or ignored. Then we go to rehearsal, and improvise, and all that's put in if it's good and funny."

After scouting the Cotswolds, Devon, Dorset, Wiltshire, Somerset and Simon's home county of Gloucestershire, *Hot Fuzz* shot in Wells, just as *Dead Right* did 14 years before. Also like *Dead Right*, the plot features a serial killer pursued by a fastidious cop and his partner, with key scenes playing out in the local Somerfield. But there the similarities end, with *Hot Fuzz* giving us exceptional London cop Nicholas Angel (Pegg), transferred to the quaint village of Sandford and partnered with sweet-natured, witless PC Danny Butterman (Frost) to rep the force at the church fête and investigate such crazed crimes as illicit hedgerow clipping and, yes, an escaped swan.

### ARMED AND DANGEROUS

Angel, however, grows increasingly convinced that the series of bizarre fatalities blighting Sandford are not accidents, but rather the heinous handiwork of supermarket manager Simon Skinner (Timothy Dalton). The real explanation, however, turns out to be even more sinister. And peculiar.

"It was the biggest brain ache," chuckles Wright. "I came away with an even stronger admiration for Agatha Christie. In this movie we had to do the set-ups for Angel's theory and for the



Real West Country police anecdotes inspired a lot of the comedy, including the escaped swan.



Shooting a scene with Edward Woodward, whose final film appearance was *Hot Fuzz*.



real explanation, which is even pettier. Both had to make sense. We did these charts. At one point Simon had had it. He was banging his head against the office wall, going, 'I just want to be in front of the camera.'"

"Years of watching those kinds of movies on Christmas Day came in handy," chuckles Pegg, who also genned up on episodes of *Columbo*. "They're always really star-studded, and one of the reasons they do that is to help you track all the characters and know what's going on. We did the same thing with this film."

*Hot Fuzz's* all-star cast includes the aforementioned Dalton, plus Jim Broadbent, Paddy Considine, Olivia Colman, Martin Freeman, Bill Nighy, Rafe Spall, Stephen Merchant, Kenneth Cranham, Lucy Punch, Alice Lowe, Paul Freeman, Stuart Wilson, Steve Coogan, Bill Bailey and, both making their final film appearances, Billie Whitelaw and Edward Woodward. Yet having such jaw-plummeting talent at their disposal did cause one major dilemma...

"When we did the scene where Angel busts their secret society, it took us the whole night to get all their coverage," explains Pegg. "We got to the end of the night and we hadn't

done any of my coverage. All of their availabilities were fixed, so we had to come back two weeks later and shoot the scene again but with the local amateur drama society playing all those roles. Going from acting with the cream of British cinematic talent to the local drama society was very difficult. I remember going up to Edgar virtually in tears that night, and saying, 'I don't know if I can do this.'"

Less tricky was the action. Sure, the extended climactic set-piece is a meticulously choreographed riot of whip pans, crash zooms and smash



cuts, with Wright fetishising gunplay like some West Country Bay, Scott or Woo, but the actors loved it.

"I was chuffed – I got to fire a gun up in the air and say, 'Aaah!'" says Frost, riffing on *Hot Fuzz's* homage to Keanu Reeves in *Point Break*. "I grew up watching those movies, and to look at a call sheet for the next day and see you're doing a shot where a helicopter is 20ft above your head... It's a great day at work, you know?"

Pegg laughs. Having spent months in the gym to morph from a "fucking potato" into "the absolute paradigm of a police officer", he relished every moment. "Edgar covered everything very studiously, but having another take of leaping through the air firing a gun is not a terrible thing to have to do. The levels of that action sequence were so much fun to shoot, from the gunfight in the pub to going out into the market square, right up to the fight with Tim Dalton in the model village..." And the famous fence 'jump', whereby Butterman face-plants through a garden fence when trying to replicate Angel's nifty gymnastics during a chase? "I had two goes at it," recalls Frost. "I got quite badly injured going through





## CLOSE UP

### EDGAR WRIGHT ON HOT FUZZ'S SOCIAL COMMENTARY...

"If there's a political point, it's a Trojan horse in a comedy or genre film. I was very happy because there was an article by the BFI that said, 'People say that Mike Leigh or Ken Loach are the best chroniclers of suburban Britain, but the Cornetto Trilogy stands up as being a document of the times.' Quite a few people have said, 'Do you think, with *The World's End*, you made a Brexit movie before Brexit?' I guess we did. Gary King is basically Little England telling the European Union to fuck off. The end of the movie is the Network, i.e. the EU, who, while they might be controlling, actually make life a lot better. Gary says 'fuck off, we don't need you' and they leave. And we're closer to the Dark Ages.

"*Hot Fuzz* is a fairly savage satire of Little England. People ask me, especially in the States, 'Why are there no minorities in *Hot Fuzz*?' Because that's the town I grew up in. It was Caucasian. But here's the irony - in Brexit, almost the whole of Somerset voted to leave, but Mendip, which is where Wells is, voted remain. I was so proud. So I should apologise for *Hot Fuzz*, really!"





the first time. It was essentially my whole right calf. It was black and blue. I had to go on anticoagulants.”

Like the action, the violence reaches outrageous levels, the ethos being that the gorier you go, the funnier it gets. “It also comes from some of the cop movies being almost a crossover between cop and horror movie,” says Wright. “*Sudden Impact* becomes a slasher movie in places. *Basic Instinct* is essentially a cop-mystery story, but ridiculously gory. You get the same kind of response to a gory moment as you do a laugh. When I made films as a teenager, they’d be very silly, but also very gory. I’d always get a reaction out of gore, and it becomes addictive getting an audience response.”

### PERMANENT RECORD

By some distance the biggest hit of Wright’s career, *Hot Fuzz*, 10 years on, is a beloved Brit classic that’s a staple of TV schedules – “They always take out the verbal c-word, but they don’t take out the swear box, which has it written down!” notes Wright. Frost, meanwhile, says he’s often stopped in the street for some *Hot* gossip, while Pegg is forever having “Morning Angle!” aimed in his direction, and frequently finds himself signing copies

**ABOVE**  
Farmers’ fondness for weapons was another idea that originated from chats with local cops.

**BELOW**  
Frost’s character Danny Butterman offers up a lesson on the movie greats.

for police officers (“I’ve been pulled over a couple of times, and they’ve said, ‘Oh, it’s you!’”). Given that all three major players say they primarily made the Cornetto movies for themselves, and were most agreeably flummoxed by their popularity, it’s something to be especially gratified by. “If I’d never made another movie, I’d feel I’ve done something I can be proud of for my entire life,” says Pegg.

As for Wright, who was last year honoured by a plaque at his

school in Wells (see below) and who is regularly sent clippings from the *Wells Journal* describing local crimes as “like something out of *Hot Fuzz*”, he smiles. “I’ve got a special place in my heart for *Hot Fuzz*, because not only is it my hometown, but it reaches this vein of silliness that makes me feel giddy thinking about it. If I’m flicking channels and it’s on, I will start

watching it!” Exiting the coffee shop, he concludes his reminiscing with the hint of a new beginning. “If we ever did a sequel to any of our movies, it would be *Hot Fuzz*,” he says. “It’s a tricky one, because any time you have a movie that has a whole arc – Danny Butterman changes completely, Nicholas Angel changes completely – then where do you go?” He frowns briefly, only for that grin to spread once more. “But I sort of have an idea...”



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INSTANT EXPERT

# EROTIC THRILLERS

Dangerous liaisons, fatal attractions...



Even before a bunny hit boiling point, '80s thrillers were hot to trot. De Palma ushered erotica out of arthouse/fleapit infamy with *Dressed To Kill*, while Richard Gere proved sex sold with *American Gigolo*. Then *Fatal Attraction* grabbed the headlines. Smart variants came in the early '90s (*Single White Female*), but over-saturation – too many Joe Eszterhas shag-parties (*Sliver*, *Showgirls*) – arrived like an ice bucket on audiences' enthusiasm.



From Barbara Stanwyck's anklet in *Double Indemnity* and Bogey/Bacall smoking in *The Big Sleep* onward, film noir and eroticism have been entwined. Forties noir crystallised fears of women empowered, a theme revived in go-getting '80s/'90s women, such as Demi Moore in *Disclosure*. If *The Last Seduction* mounted a post-feminist case for powerful women, so did the Wachowskis' *Bound*: more top-drawer neo-noir than top-shelf titillation.



Art, or art-wank? Many auteurs have been tantalised by glitter/grime possibilities. De Palma mixed voyeurism with postmodern play (*Body Double*); Lynch staged threesomes of sex, psychosis and surrealism (*Blue Velvet*); and Cronenberg coupled chrome and copulation (*Crash*).



While digital cheapies stifled the genre in the '90s, it's returned in sporadic blended form. Satiri-horror *Cherry Falls*, Jane Campion's *In The Cut*, *Fifty Shades...* and Eli Roth's *Knock Knock* offer bankable or potent cases. A recent *Guardian* feature suggested films such as *When The Bough Breaks* show a new trend, in which white yuppie anxiety is transferred to "the upper-middle-class black nightmare of infidelity". True or not, this genre isn't lying down.



If the genre's roots lie (partly) in world-cinema boundary-pushers such as *In The Realm Of The Senses*, so the overseas market keeps delivering. If Pedro Almodóvar enriched the field with *Live Flesh*, Ang Lee's *Lust*, *Caution* and François Ozon's slippery *Swimming Pool* also offer ripe pickings. Latterly, Alain Guiraudie's *Stranger By The Lake*, Mathieu Amalric's *The Blue Room* and Park Chan-wook's *The Handmaiden* have reframed genre basics. **KH**

KEY MOVIES



## BODY HEAT

1981 **★★★★**

William Hurt's lawyer gets scalded by a smoking Kathleen Turner's mariticide plans in Lawrence Kasdan's sun-stroked neo-noir: a pleasingly dense, dirty twist on *Double Indemnity*.



## FATAL ATTRACTION

1987 **★★★★**

Glenn Close's wild-haired woman scorned teaches Michael Douglas a lesson in Adrian Lyne's thriller of adultery and revenge: the hot-topic pet-boiler of its day.



## BASIC INSTINCT

1992 **★★★★**

Sharon Stone's leg-crossing author taunts Michael Douglas' pullover'd policeman in Paul Verhoeven's ludicrously entertaining source of many a copycat and controversy.

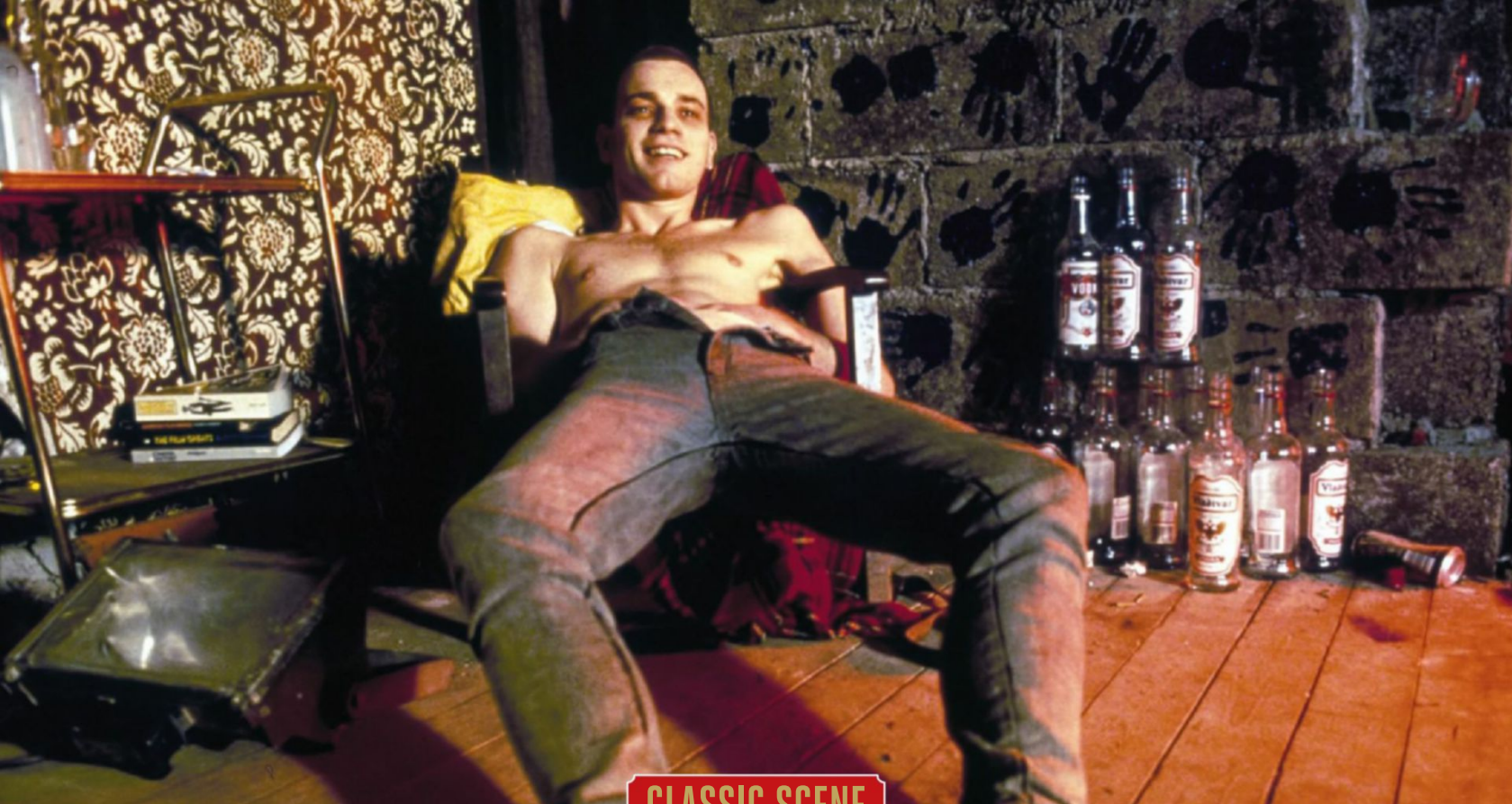


## THE LAST SEDUCTION

1994 **★★★★**

Linda Fiorentino's man-eating Bridget shags 'n' schemes her way through John Dahl's over-boiled noir: the pleasure's in her wickedly brazen lack of measure.





## CLASSIC SCENE

# TRAINSPOTTING

Renton has a less-than-perfect day in his childhood bedroom...



01

### WALL SPACE

After Renton (Ewan McGregor) ODs, his parents insist on a clean break and lock him in his boyhood room. As withdrawal kicks in, the room stretches away. Director Danny Boyle encouraged production designer Kave Quinn to “make it even bigger” to highlight Renton’s isolation. The finishing touch? Train wallpaper.



02

### LONG DARK NIGHT

Boyle described Underworld’s music as “the pulse of the film”. ‘Dark And Long (Dark Train)’ provides the suitably paranoid accompaniment here. The group’s Rick Smith was impressed that Boyle wanted to use their music for something other than “violent club scenes with angry people and machine guns”.



03

### FRIEND ZONE

Renton begins to hallucinate about his friends, a Greek chorus that handily kept the cast in one budget-friendly location. Diane (Kelly Macdonald) was meant to sing David Bowie’s ‘Golden Years’, but producer Andrew McDonald realised she “hadn’t even heard of it”. Instead, she sings New Order’s ‘Temptation’.



04

### DALE FANTASY

Dale Winton, then the star of daytime TV hit *Supermarket Sweep*, cameos as a gameshow host asking questions about HIV and Aids. It’s one of many Britpop-era flourishes that reinforces Boyle’s desire to “capture the drive and energy of modern pop culture that was coming through in Britain”.



05

### TURKEY SHOOT

McGregor found the cold turkey sequence “physically, a tough couple of days”, but gained inspiration from spending time with recovering addicts at Carlton Athletic Club. He’d considered shooting up for the experience, but realised, “I got everything I needed from them.”



06

### MOPPET SHOW

Renton’s rock bottom is imagining baby Dawn, who crawls along the ceiling then falls onto him. Including the dead baby was something the crew insisted on, despite complaints. “It’s the huge turning point of the book,” reckons McDonald and a necessary counterweight to the story’s “flirting with the lifestyle”. SK



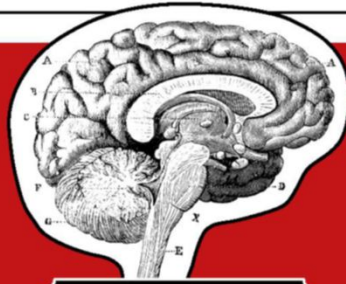


### EASY

1. Who becomes the Apprentice in *Fantasia*?
2. Which was the most recent Disney ditty to win a Best Song Oscar?
3. Which '90s Disney hit became the first 'toon to bag a Best Picture nomination?
4. Complete this *The Little Mermaid* rhyme: "Darling it's better/Down where it's \_\_\_\_."
5. In which Disney classic (remade in 2015) is the song 'Bibbidi-Bobbidi-Boo'?

### MEDIUM

1. Complete the *Tangled* line: "I'm malicious, mean and scary/My sneer could curdle \_\_\_\_."
2. Which Disney hit features the song 'I'll Make A Man Out Of You'?
3. Phil Collins has provided songs for two Disney movies: *Tarzan* and...?
4. Which formerly married couple covered *Aladdin*'s 'A Whole New World' in 2006?



### THE TF BRAIN

## DISNEY MUSICALS

*Lion King! Little Mermaid!*  
*Phil Collins! Are you in tune*  
*with the Mouse House?*

5. Disney's signature tune 'When You Wish Upon A Star' originally featured in which film?

### HARD

1. Which of these songs from *The Lion King* was Oscar nominated? a) 'Can You Feel The



Love Tonight?' b) 'Hakuna Matata'  
c) 'Circle Of Life'.

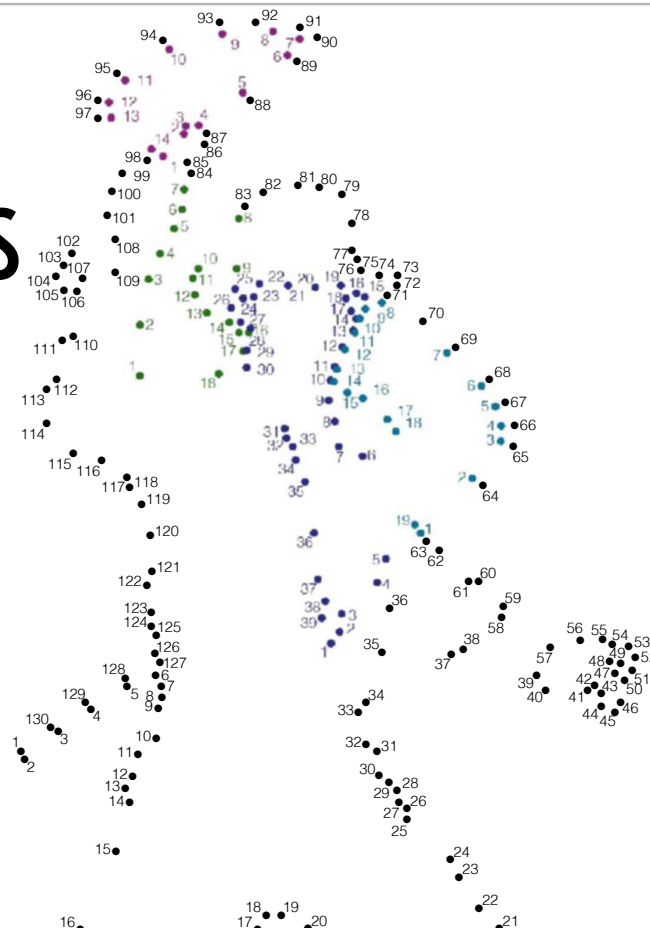
2. Name the odd one out: a) 'Love Is An Open Door' b) 'Fixer Upper' c) 'Making Today A Perfect Day'.
3. Zoëy Deschanel contributed a number of tracks, including the theme song, to which 2011 Disney production?
4. *Enchanted*'s (2007) 'Happy Working Song' is a homage to which iconic Disney tune?
5. What do Sterling Holloway, Selena Gomez and Scarlett Johansson all have in common?

**ANSWERS:**  
EASY 1. Mickey Mouse 2. 'Let It Go' (Frozen) 3. *Beauty And The Beast* 4. 'Watter' 5. *Cinderella* MEDIUM 1. 'Daisy' 2. *Mulan* 3. *Brother Bear* 4. Peter Andre and Katie Price 5. *Pinocchio* HARD 1. All of them! 2 c) 4. *Whistle While You Work* 5. They've all sung versions of 'Trust In Me' (The Jungle Book).

### DOT-TO-DOT

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# 60 Second Screenplay



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**FADE IN:**

**EXT: NEW YORK — 1926**

NEWT REDMAYNDER passes through customs carrying a literally shifty suitcase.

**NEWT REDMAYNDER**

Now, now, my little ones. Don't you worry. I love all living things, no matter how evil and deadly, and you can trust me to keep you safe.

He immediately loses a creature. Then he drops a precious egg. Then he accidentally reveals his powers and breaks into a bank vault.

**KOWALSKI THE MUGGLE**

Hey look! We have the same suitcase! I sure hope that doesn't become a source of confusion and farce.

It does.

**KATHERINE WATERSTON**

Sigh. I am from the Magical Congress and I'm supposed to protect these No-Majs from knowing about us American wizards and our new words that are different from the last franchise.

**NEWT REDMAYNDER**

OK, but it's important that I mention Hogwarts and Dumbledore at least once so that everyone knows we are connected to the Harry Potter films.

**KATHERINE WATERSTON**

How exactly?

**NEWT REDMAYNDER**

You'll find out in the next movie. Or maybe the one after that.

**EXT: ALLEYWAY**

VILLAINOUS COLIN FARRELL secretly meets with WEIRD EZRA MILLER.

**VILLAINOUS COLIN FARRELL**

I need you to keep an eye out for any suspicious people acting strangely.

**WEIRD EZRA MILLER**

Meep!

**INT/EXT: NEWT REDMAYNDER'S SUITCASE/MAGICAL ZOO**

NEWT REDMAYNDER gives a guided tour around his menagerie of dangerous and unlicensed animals.

**NEWT REDMAYNDER**

This is a Graphorn. This is a Nundu. This is an Occamy. This is a... Frank.

**KOWALSKI THE MUGGLE**

What's that terrifying black cloud over there?

**NEWT REDMAYNDER**

That's probably not important.

They capture the rest of the escaped creatures to pad out the film until the more serious plot kicks in again. KATHERINE WATERSTON then seizes them, taking them to the Magical Congress.

**MADAME PRESIDENT WIZARD**

Your beasts are dangerous! If the public finds out wizards exist, there'll be a war, but we should be aiming for tolerance. Ah, you see — there's a political allegory here.

**NEWT REDMAYNDER**

But these creatures are endangered and need to be protected. That's right, this film has more than one message.

**AUTHOR J.K. ROWLING**

Also, Dumbledore is going to be openly gay. Not yet though. You'll have to wait for the next movie. Or maybe the one after that.

Suddenly, WEIRD ABUSED EZRA MILLER turns into a terrifying black cloud and goes on a rampage until the super-tolerant MADAME PRESIDENT WIZARD shows up and kills him.

**VILLAINOUS COLIN FARRELL**

Wasn't that a bit unnecessary?

**MADAME PRESIDENT WIZARD**

Arrest that man! And check his face, just in case.

VILLAINOUS COLIN FARRELL turns into SECRET JOHNNY DEPP CAMEO.

**SECRET JOHNNY DEPP CAMEO**

It's me, Grindelwald! The bad wizard that was mentioned a few times throughout this film.

**NEWT REDMAYNDER**

But what was your plan?

**VILLAINOUS JOHNNY DEPP**

You'll find out in the next movie. Or...

**THE AUDIENCE**

Yeah, OK, we get it.

MADAME PRESIDENT WIZARD orders everything to be OK again using magic.

**MADAME PRESIDENT WIZARD**

Now we just have to maintain our fair and respectful co-existence with the No-Majs by wiping all their memories of anything they have learned about what's going on.

**KOWALSKI THE MUGGLE**

There's really no need...

**FIN**

**NEXT ISSUE:**

**ROGUE ONE: A STAR WARS STORY**

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